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— Buy United States War Bonds and Stamps —

The League's Business

Louis Brownlow Retires

FOR the rather inadequate reason that he is 65, Louis Brownlow retired as director of the Public Administration Clearing House as of May 1, 1945, and his place was taken by Herbert Emmerich, heretofore associate director. This is major news in the field of public administration, in which Mr. Brownlow has been, for fifteen years, a vivid and central personage.

The first fifteen years of his career he was a newspaperman—reporter, Washington correspondent and editor. President Wilson in 1915 made him one of the three commissioners who governed the District of Columbia. In 1920 he became city manager of Petersburg, Virginia, and in 1924 won promotion to the city managership of Knoxville, Tennessee.

His performance in Knoxville provides one of the top triumphs of the city manager movement and the story is still being told. The outgoing old-style government, which had bitterly opposed the coming of the council-manager plan, made the budget under which Brownlow had to work during his first year. To embarrass and discredit the new regime, it cut appropriations \$500,000. When the fiscal year was well started, Brownlow reported that by various economies he was going to be able to get through on the reduced funds. A few months later he reported he would have a surplus. His next report was that his surplus was going to be so big it would be feasible to return 10 per cent of the reduced tax levy to the taxpayers if the council approved of that method of relieving an overflowing city treasury! And that incredible dividend (\$280,000) was duly paid! There have been many fine accomplishments by effective city managers, but that remains the one that tops all stories of the profession.

In 1926 Brownlow joined the City Housing Corporation which built a garden city at Radburn, New Jersey, and was its first municipal manager.

In 1930 the Spelman Fund, which had been contributing to the secretariat and research funds of various organizations of public officials to enable them to improve their techniques, created the Public Administration Clearing House which took over the task of developing such associations and getting them into touch with each other on the municipal and the state levels. Brownlow became director and the result has been a great invigoration of association work in the field of public administration. Most of these associations were led into making their headquarters in Chicago, and the Spelman Fund provided the building at 1313 East 60th Street on the Chicago University campus which now houses sixteen secretariats of state and municipal associations of officials.

For all of these, Mr. Brownlow has been a warm, energetic and

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National Municipal Review

Editorial Comment

The Sick State Legislatures

THE complacent equanimity with which press and public view wrongdoing by public officials imperils the future of our democratic system.

In Michigan a grand jury indicted members of the state legislature for bribery but in the state of New York a grand jury merely chided the legislature for what in private life would be called stealing and suggested that the practice be stopped. Expense accounts, the grand jury charged, were used to buy wearing apparel, theater and world series tickets, flowers and other appurtenances of the good life. Relatives and political henchmen who did no work whatever were carried on the legislative payroll. Political lawyers were hired as counsel to legislative committees at fat salaries without expecting or being expected to earn the money.

Where is the indignation which such conditions ought to arouse? What do newspaper editors and civic organizations think of this? Do they feel no obligation to come to the rescue of democracy here at home? Or are they too busy thinking of establishing democracy in countries some of which wouldn't know what to do with it if they had it?

Perhaps the fact that the "villain" in the plot is plural confuses the champions of decency in public affairs in the same way that there is great concern when one man is trapped in a cave or five men are adrift in the middle of the Pacific

but there is relative indifference when 150 miners are doomed.

Or perhaps there is a feeling that the "villain" is an impersonal system and that in a democracy one has to expect a certain amount of that sort of thing.

If it be granted, for the sake of argument, that the Michigan and New York situations are caused by a system, why shouldn't there be a revolt against that system? Why shouldn't there be a demand for a system that might prevent such thievery and selling out of the public interest?

Systems to stop this sort of outrage are available. Distinguished students of government have known about them and have advocated them during an entire generation in which our political leadership has been looking fixedly in the opposite direction.

A one-house legislature with few members, which has proved so successful in Nebraska,¹ would tend to insure a better type of legislator and would make it easier for the public to know what is done and who does it.

A genuine merit system for legislative employees would stop the employment of incompetent political hacks.

A legislative council, staffed with experts, would make the gravy-laden interim committees unnecessary,

¹See "Unicameralism Passes Test," by John P. Senning. The REVIEW, February 1944.

would do a better job and would cost much less. It would also be a bulwark against the pressure groups and lobbyists who thwart the public will and corrupt the legislators.

These are simple, effective, workable, businesslike remedies. It is almost impossible to find competent authorities on public affairs who would not so testify.

Yet, unless the long suffering public raises a great hue and cry in both New York and Michigan, here is what is almost sure to happen: Dignified committees will solemnly examine the unfortunate state of affairs. They will say, "Tsk! Tsk! Such things shouldn't be." They will suggest a few mild remedies which will constitute treatment of the symptoms rather than the disease. The legislatures will adopt the more innocuous of these, remarking meanwhile that "this is not the time" for

sweeping, fundamental changes and that, anyway, they aren't practical. The reformers, they will say, just never will understand how a practical political system has to work; and besides (with an eye cocked at the farmers and small communities), a small legislature would probably be dominated by the big wicked cities and wouldn't that be awful.

As long as we permit this type of disease to fester on the body politic, we've got a nerve, to say the least, to undertake to advise other parts of the world how to order their affairs. And states which have had no recent scandals needn't raise an eyebrow at Michigan and New York. They, at least, have had the fortitude to dig into their nasty situations and bring them out into the open. Stone-throwers from other places are likely to find that they live in glass houses.

A Logical Question

CONTEMPLATING the record of the recent session of the Minnesota legislature, the influential *Minneapolis Tribune* asks:

"Why shouldn't Minnesota bring its constitution up to date to make governmental machinery function efficiently? Why shouldn't it, among other things, have a unicameral legislature of moderate size, whose members are well paid and responsible? Certainly some way must be devised

to guard against such slipshod legislation as was jammed through on school aid at the recent session."

Long years of stagnation or piecemeal tinkering have made unworkable messes out of virtually all state constitutions. They need modernization to put them in step with the impressive progress in other fields of human endeavor. An examination of the record of any recent legislature will demonstrate the desperate need for basic changes.

San Francisco's Unique Charter

Charter commission's hope that "half a manager is better than none," seeking to reconcile demands for both council-manager plan and strong mayor government, stands test of 14 years.

By BERT W. LEVIT*

SAN FRANCISCO's life span significantly links America's national Declaration of Independence with an international declaration of interdependence.

It was in 1776 that the military *presidio* of San Francisco, the civilian settlement of Yerba Buena and the mission of Dolores were planted by the Golden Gate. These three rudiments, nurtured in the fertile soil of Spanish colonization and invigorated by infusion of the American pioneer, coalesced to form the lusty, colorful community that is San Francisco. Today, that community is host to the nations of the world striving to build the foundation for a lasting peace.

In many respects the political history of San Francisco is unique. From vigilante to city-county consolidation, from *ayuntamiento* and *alcalde* to chief administrative officer—the trend of civic affairs has not always been for the best, but it has generally been different.

The city's first charter was formu-

lated by act of the California legislature in 1850. In retrospect it appears to have been drawn carefully and intelligently in the light of contemporaneous fashions in municipal government. But it proved such a colossal failure in action that vigilante activity alone prevented complete municipal chaos. Waste, extravagance and mismanagement increased simultaneously with the population; and the one thing that kept pace with their mushroom growth was public indifference to political matters. An election campaign conducted by the first Vigilance Committee was marked by publication of a document that will be as worthy of note a century hence as it was nearly a century ago:

We . . . appeal to you, in the name of the common good . . . and would earnestly urge, that in casting your votes for suitable men to enact and administer laws, you will be careful to disregard all questions but such as relate to the general welfare. In whatever light we may examine the present evils of society, every man must come to the conclusion that the primary error is in the people themselves. Trace the troubled waters of the community back to their source and the explorer will find his journey terminate at the ballot box.

The city and county of San Francisco came into being in 1856 when the state legislature enacted the municipality's second charter. This combination of two units of local government into one was a valid con-

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tribution to American political theory. Experience has found it a useful and workable form under suitable territorial and population conditions. Certainly there is no inclination to abandon it here, although elsewhere its use has been limited to a few conscious adaptations and to several instances where urban development has resulted in an emaciation of independent county functions.

Consolidation Stays

This consolidation feature of the so-called consolidation act was its most striking and, fortunately, its only permanent element. As an effective instrument of government the act was sadly deficient. It imposed drastic restrictions on the authority of local officials that were ludicrous in the extreme. The growing metropolis was powerless to fix the number or compensation of city employees; it was forced to go to the state legislature even to appoint a janitor for the city hall. City officials had to lobby in Sacramento for power to keep the streets clean, to pay rent for a police station, to lay gas pipes. Nor was this all. The governor of the state rather than the mayor appointed the members of important local boards and commissions, including police, health and parks.

On four occasions unsuccessful attempts were made to secure a measure of home rule. Finally, in 1898, a freeholders charter was adopted at the polls. It was ratified by the state legislature in the following year and became effective in January of 1900.

The freeholders charter was, of course, a definite improvement over the consolidation act. It provided

for the then prevalent type of mayor-council government, introduced civil service, and returned the several boards and commissions to local appointment. It was claimed that the charter would redeem the failing credit of the city by mandating a solvent government, and would ensure administrative efficiency by separating the legislative and executive functions. Under this charter San Francisco had its good times governmentally, but it had its bad times as well; and as time went on the bad times predominated.

By 1916 competent observers recognized that drastic charter revision was a necessity, but it was not achieved until 1931. It would appear that the 1900 charter had been oversold; its two most serious operational defects turned out to be the very same factors—fiscal and administrative procedure—which had been advanced as its principal virtues at the time of its adoption.

San Francisco is a politically mature city. The voter is often apathetic, inclined rather to be satisfied than suspicious. He has no illusions of governmental perfection; however, he is fairly certain that conditions might be much worse than they are, and so he is generally willing to let well enough alone. This has resulted in a kind of civic inertia lasting for long periods during which incompetency conceals itself beneath the cloak of familiarity. But ever and anon the public wakes to reality, sweeps aside some of the little men, refurnishes a room or two or three of the political structure, and promptly abdicates to the "smart" ones, who gradually emerge from

temporary retirement. In all this there is nothing highly unusual unless it is the fact that Mr. and Mrs. Average San Franciscan choose this attitude deliberately.

A Compromise Plan

It took upwards of twenty years before the people got disgusted enough with the consolidation act, despite its obvious puerilities, to do something about it. The 1900 charter did not reach the scrap-pile for a decade and a half after its imperfections had become common knowledge. Even then it was replaced by a compromise plan.

And a very interesting compromise it was, in which elements of the strong mayor theory were blended with the professional manager idea. None of the standard labels accurately describes it. Like the consolidation act of 75 years before the 1931 charter was a distinct departure from previously accepted methods of local administrative structure. Admittedly, the originalities were more pragmatic than philosophical. Some groups were urging adoption of the council-manager plan. Others favored a streamlined strong mayor setup. Most of the politicians wanted no change at all, for the usual reasons. The freeholders, perhaps not unwisely, decided that half a manager was better than none.

The voters elect a mayor, a council of eleven supervisors, an assessor, treasurer, sheriff, city attorney, public defender and district attorney. Doubtless all of these except mayor, supervisors and district attorney could appropriately have been made appointive officers. But it must be

remembered that the elective group formerly included also the tax collector, recorder, county clerk, public administrator and coroner. Also elected are the judges and a five-member board of education nominated by the mayor.

The two greatest contributions of the new charter are to be found in the absolute prohibition against supervisorial interference in administrative matters, and in the fiscal provisions designed to tighten and improve budgeting and accounting procedures. The latter features are presided over by a controller appointed by the mayor subject to confirmation by the council. Like the chief administrative officer his tenure is indefinite and terminable only by a two-thirds vote of the council.

Basic administrative functions fall readily into three divisions: departments under control of the mayor, departments under control of the chief administrative officer and public utility departments.

Management of the city's extensive utilities plant is vested in a commission appointed by the mayor. The five commissioners, however, have a large degree of independence because they serve for four-year terms and can be removed only in the same manner as elective officials. Moreover, the terms are staggered so that only one commissioner's term expires each year; and budgetary control by mayor and council is limited. The commission appoints and removes at will a manager of utilities at whose pleasure the heads of the several utility departments serve. Employees below the level of department head, as in all other city depart-

ments (with minor exceptions), are under a civil service system administered by a three-man commission whose members serve under protective tenure similar to that accorded the utility commissioners save that the overlapping terms run for six years instead of four.

Duties of "Manager"

The chief administrative officer hardly bears a truly descriptive designation. While he occupies an executive post of considerable importance, he cannot accurately be said to be the "chief" administrative official of the city in the sense that this is true of a city manager or of a mayor in a typical strong mayor government. In San Francisco the principal administrative official is still the mayor, for reasons that will presently appear.

The motives of the freeholders are not difficult to discern. They wanted to insure a businesslike handling of as large a portion of the city's administration as they thought could be "sold" to the public over political opposition, and they wanted to insulate this portion from "politics." So they originated the position of chief administrative officer. Under his control were placed some of the most vital departments including health, works, purchasing, properties, and finance and records—although the "finance" features of the last named are hardly what would be implied by the nomenclature. Before adoption of the new charter many of these departments were run by semi-independent and extremely unsatisfactory boards and commissions or by officials elected

directly by the people. In this respect, therefore, the present charter represents a substantial improvement.

Within the limitations of his jurisdiction the chief administrative officer occupies an unusually independent executive post. Although in the first instance appointed by the mayor he has every likelihood of holding office for life. His tenure is unlimited by specific term of office. Neither the mayor who appoints him, nor subsequent mayors, can remove him. Removal requires affirmative action by two-thirds of the council—that is, by eight out of eleven supervisors—based upon written charges and after public hearing. Clearly, this can be anticipated only under circumstances of the most flagrant derelictions or abuses. Furthermore, neither mayor nor supervisors may deal with any department under the chief administrative officer except through him. He, in turn, has full power to appoint and remove at will each of his department heads.

Nevertheless, the apparent authority of the chief administrative officer over the departments placed under his supervision is subject to a potent curtailment—the mayor controls the purse strings. The charter provides that after the chief administrative officer has determined budget requirements for each of his departments, these requirements must then be submitted to the mayor. While the mayor is limited in making additions to the amounts requested, there is no such restriction on his power to cut them down. Nor is there any appeal from his decisions, for the council is prohibited from increasing the budget requests (except for

capital items) over amounts approved by the mayor. As a result, the mayor is in a position to starve any or all departments under the chief administrative officer if he refuses to follow instructions.

Thus far no difficulty has arisen in this regard. The first chief administrative officer served only under the mayor who appointed him and was apparently disinclined to exercise in any large degree that independence of action which the freeholders must have contemplated. He died in office. The second appointee has carried over from one administration to another and has functioned competently and affirmatively under both.

The Mayor's Job

The mayor of San Francisco occupies a position roughly analogous to that of the president in national affairs. With his extensive powers of appointment and removal, his veto over action of the council, his predominance in budgetary matters, he outranks the supervisors both in prestige and in fact. Under his direct domination the charter places a number of administrative departments, among which are police, fire, planning and parks. He holds a very real financial control over the chief administrative officer. Even the utility departments may be amenable to mayoral dictation, because it happens that the terms of the commissioners are staggered in such a way that a majority of the commission leaves office within thirteen months after a new mayor is elected.

Unfortunately this great power is not accompanied by commensurate

accountability. Between the mayor and the utility management stands the utilities commission, apparently responsible and independent. Between the mayor and many administrative departments stands the chief administrative officer, as effective a political buffer as ingenuity could devise. And worse, between the mayor and each of his own departments has been placed a board or commission with from three to more than a dozen members.

Experience of municipalities everywhere long since demonstrated that board management of the general run of administrative departments is hopelessly impractical and destructive of executive efficiency. San Francisco's experience has not been different in this regard. Indeed, one of the primary objections to the 1900 charter was its many cumbersome boards separating the mayor from the department heads. Some of these were eliminated by the new charter and no one doubts that the change was salutary. Retention of a few might be justified, as, for example, in the case of education where a truly independent governance representative of diverse community viewpoints is desired, or when quasi-judicial as opposed to strictly administrative functions predominate. Typical of the holdover boards are the police and fire commissions. Each consists of three commissioners appointed by the mayor and removable at his pleasure. In turn, the commissioners appoint and remove the respective departmental chiefs at will. As though to deliberately conceal from the

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Growth of Irish Manager Plan

Starting with Cork in 1929 the council-manager form of government, patterned on American model, has spread to four additional municipalities and to all counties.

By JOHN J. HORGAN*

TWENTY-FIVE years ago, after the termination of the last World War, few problems seemed more important than those concerning the development of local government. A community had, it was clear, everything to gain by a constantly improving standard of social life and such improvement depended mainly on a sound system of municipal government.

We were passing into a period of tremendous uncertainty which called for experiment and change. Study of the principal European local government systems—the French with its Napoleonic emphasis on complete central control; the English, at the other extreme, with its almost complete local freedom; the German, largely bureaucratic and dominated by the rather forbidding figure of the burgomaster—yielded no models which seemed suitable.

In that great political laboratory, the United States of America, however, examples of real and notable improvement in local government were to be found. The most suc-

cessful of these improvisations seemed to be the system of city government by an elected commission [council] with its development, the city manager plan.¹

The government of a modern city, with its complicated problems, demands concentrated authority and efficient management, both, however, subject to democratic control. It was this result that these American systems of city government aimed at securing. They embodied both a protest and a policy; a protest against the old and out-of-date methods of city administration and a policy which aimed at fixing definite responsibility on a few people.

Commission government started at Washington, the federal capital, in 1878. But this arrangement grew out of the peculiar relation of the national government to this particular city and it was not extended elsewhere. Its modern development began at Galveston, Texas, in 1901. There corrupt local administration was brought to a climax by the intervention of nature in the shape of a tidal wave. This cataclysm swept away not only one-third of the city but also its system of government. On the initiative of the citizens a commission of five members was

*Mr. Horgan, an attorney, has held numerous public offices, among them coroner of County Cork since 1914; he was chairman of the Cork Harbor Commissioners, Cork Public Library Committee, Irish Free State Liquor Commission and a member of the Town Tenants Committee. One of his chief interests has been the manager plan of government. Among his publications are *The Cork City Manager Act—Its Origin, Provisions and Application* and *Home Rule—A Critical Consideration*.

¹See my articles in *Studies: City Management in America*, March 1920; *City Administration in Ireland*, September 1923; and *Local Government Developments at Home and Abroad*, December 1926.

elected by the people, each commissioner being made responsible for a definite department of municipal affairs. This experiment was a complete success. The plan quickly spread throughout the United States and is now operating in practically every state in the union.

The commission-manager or city manager plan was a further development which aimed at securing an even greater concentration of executive and administrative responsibility. It originated on a large scale at Dayton, Ohio, in 1914, under somewhat similar conditions. Under its provisions a city is governed by a commission of five members elected by the people. This commission appoints a city manager who holds office during the will and pleasure of the commission and who is responsible for the execution of the commission's policy and the administration of the city. The American city manager thus differs from the French prefect and the German burgomaster, who are the masters rather than the servants of the local councils.

The city manager plan has now been widely adopted in the small and medium-sized cities of the United States and is a permanent feature of American local government. It was largely from this experiment that the citizens of Cork found inspiration for the Cork City Management Act of 1929 which set a new headline for local government in Ireland.

The story of how that act came to be passed is not without interest and constitutes a very definite milestone in the history of Irish local government.

In 1925 the Irish government, acting under its newly-acquired powers, dissolved the Cork Corporation and appointed a commissioner to manage the affairs of the city. Outside the parties immediately affected there was little criticism of this drastic step. Most people seemed to be apathetic or to look upon the ultimate reinstatement of the mayor and council system as a foregone conclusion. A few Cork citizens felt, however, that while the government of their city by a commissioner might, under the circumstances, be justified as a temporary measure, it should not, and indeed could not, be a permanent solution.

Cork Gets Manager Plan

A return to the old, inefficient methods seemed equally undesirable. Cork, they felt, had a chance to set a headline for the whole country by initiating a new form of municipal government which would embody the best feature of the old system, the local control of local taxation, with the best feature of the new, the delegation of executive responsibility and administration to semi-independent expert management.

A committee representing commercial and industrial interests determined to draft a scheme on these lines and, after much discussion and amendment, this draft finally took shape as an agreed proposal for the future government of Cork, and was presented to the government in the form of a bill. This draft, although undoubtedly influenced to a considerable extent by American experience and example, only took from this source what was considered useful and applicable.

Finally, in 1928, General Richard Mulcahy, the recently-appointed Minister for Local Government, agreed to introduce as a government measure a bill substantially based on the Cork proposals, and this measure, in spite of vehement opposition, was finally passed into law in 1929.

Under this important act, as since amended, the local government of Cork is carried on by a council and city manager. The council, or corporation, is elected by the citizens every three years voting as one electoral area under proportional representation. It has the following major powers and functions, namely: the making of any rate or the borrowing of any money, the making, amending or revoking of by-laws, the making or revoking of any order or resolution applying an act of Parliament, the promoting or opposing of legislation, the prosecution and defense of legal proceedings, the appointment or election of any person to any other local body, the supervision of elections, the admission of persons to the freedom of the city, the suspension or removal of the city manager. The removal of the city manager requires a two-thirds majority of the council and must be sanctioned by the Minister for Local Government. The Minister has also power to further extend by order the powers, functions and duties of the council on an application made by two-thirds of its members.

All other powers, functions and duties of the corporation are vested in the city manager who holds office until he dies, resigns or is removed. His principal duties are to advise the council and attend its meetings,

to furnish any information required by its members, to control the officers and servants of the corporation and to decide such questions as may arise in relation to their service, remuneration, privileges, and superannuation. He also prepares the annual budget or rates estimate for adoption or alteration by the council.

The subsequent history of this Cork experiment may be briefly told. In 1930 it was, in a slightly modified form, extended to Dublin and Dunleary, in 1934 to Limerick, and in 1939 to Waterford. Galway alone, when created a municipality in 1937, preferred the old mayor and council system.

Counties Next

By the County Management Act of 1940, which did not come into operation till August 1942, the manager system, with certain necessary adjustments, was applied to the county councils and to the whole system of local government outside the cities. The boards of health were dissolved and their functions transferred to the county councils. The county manager is thus, in effect, the executive officer for the local government of each county.

The manager system has, therefore, after ten years been applied to virtually our entire system of local government. Moreover, as imitation is said to be the sincerest form of flattery, it may perhaps be mentioned that the Belfast Administration Act of 1942 is in fact a more drastic version of the Cork plan. The vital difference is that the three administrators who control the government of Belfast have also the power to make rates and raise loans. They

thus resemble the commissioners who govern Washington where a similar problem, arising from the clash of government and civic interests, exists. One of the Belfast administrators is a paid civil servant who is a whole-time official and is in effect the city manager, the other two are leading citizens of wide public experience, appointed *ad hoc* by the northern government. They are not whole-time officers and are unpaid.

The Belfast Act, in fact, vests the municipal government of Belfast in the government nominees, leaving the city council little more than an empty symbol. There are already very definite signs that the citizens of the northern capital, who are not wanting in civic pride, are not likely to long tolerate this state of affairs, and the act, which only applies for an experimental period, is unlikely to be renewed.

The only material change that has been made in the manager system since its establishment here is the provision which enables a council by resolution to require the manager to do some particular act not within its ordinary powers so long as it is not of general application and does not affect the council's employees.

The difficulty of applying the manager system to the county councils owing to the lack of a corps of trained managers was ingeniously surmounted by providing in the original law that the existing county secretaries should in most cases be appointed to the position of county manager. This expedient provided at once for these positions a body of men not only trained in public administration but also fully in touch

with local affairs. In time, no doubt, a local government civil service will develop, and managers who prove their worth should be able to secure promotion from one county to another, thus ensuring not only growth and vitality in administration but freedom from local influences.

Plan Is Democratic

The criticism is sometimes made that the manager system of local government is undemocratic. This statement does not bear scrutiny and seems due to a confusion of ideas. A system of local government, established by our national Parliament after full discussion, which vests in elected local representatives the powers of legislation and taxation cannot be called undemocratic. In fact it is based on the same principles as our national government itself; for while the Oireachtas [Irish Parliament] decides questions of policy and taxation, their execution and administration are carried out by the government, each member being responsible for the management of a separate department.

At the best, government by the people means, and in the national sphere can only mean, representative and responsible government. Democracy as we know it, in its political aspect, is representative government. A city or county manager is an executive official who must accept and carry out the policy of the council to which he is responsible. He is a free agent only in the execution and administration thereof, but even there he is subject to the vigilant supervision of the Local Government Department of the national government.

A more pertinent criticism of the manager system is, I think, that by limiting the functions of the elected council it may reduce local interest in municipal affairs. There is also a real danger that, as has happened in America, the more responsible element in the community may be inclined to rely on the manager to control policy and expenditure and cease themselves to take an active interest in local affairs. Such a tendency would lead eventually to a deterioration in the personnel of local bodies. On the other hand, the reduction in the time and number of council and committee meetings, which the manager system has made possible, should enable men of ability and standing to take their share of public responsibility without neglecting their own affairs.

All systems of government, however, are imperfect and all should be dynamic. The manager system, like the rest, can and will be improved as the result of experience. But it must not be forgotten that it was devised originally for urban conditions. In a city a manager can keep in touch with local representatives and with public opinion. He is accessible to all. He can observe and remedy defects of administration. In a large rural area like a county this is much more difficult, if not impossible. I greatly fear that the manager system was applied holus-bolus to our counties by some unimaginative civil servant who had little experience of rural life. If it is to succeed in this wider field I think it

will be necessary to establish closer connections between the county manager and his wide domain.

But the real strength of any system of government is derived from an informed and sensitive public opinion. The county and city managers must, therefore, if they are to succeed in their task, keep the public fully informed, listen patiently to complaints and secure the approval of their councils to changes in policy or administration. They must, in short, seek to lead rather than to drive, to persuade rather than to compel.

Civic Education Stressed

But there is something even more important to remember. As the most perfect machine is useless in the hands of a fool, so no system of government is any better than the people who operate it. What we need therefore above all is a wide policy of adult education designed to produce an educated democracy.

Casual lectures on economic and social questions and sporadic broadcast talks can only scratch the surface of this untilled field. Far more is needed. If we are to have good government we must first have educated citizens, men and women trained to understand and lead.

No one is now foolish enough to believe that the world can be made "safe for democracy," for democracy, as Chesterton wisely said, is "a dangerous trade." Its preservation in the local, as in the national, sphere demands continual struggle, constant sacrifice and eternal vigilance.

Device for Operating Utilities

Use of "authorities" by Pennsylvania local governments for management of revenue-producing projects spreads; 50 corporations, three with joint ownership, now active.

By CHARLES F. LEEDECKER*

A NEW device was introduced into Pennsylvania's system of local government in 1935, when the legislature passed the municipal authority act. Although authorities have been used in other states and in other countries, this was the first general attempt to make use of it in this state. All types of local governments were empowered by the law to create municipal authorities.

A municipal authority is a special public corporation whose obligations are payable solely from its revenue. In this respect it differs from special assessment or improvement districts which are financed by special assessments or by use of the general taxing power.

The authority performs a municipal function, yet it is not a municipal government. Its funds are not tax moneys and it does not have the taxing power. The authority manages a revenue-producing project that is under public control; its business must be self-liquidating, and its life is limited by law to 50 years.

Under the municipal authorities act and its amendments authorities may be created for any of the follow-

ing projects: transportation, marketing, shopping terminals, bridges, tunnels, streets, highways, parkways, traffic distribution centers, traffic circles, parking spaces, airports, hangars, parks, recreation grounds and facilities, sewers, sewer systems, sewage treatment works, incinerator plants, water systems, swimming pools, playgrounds, lakes, low head dams, hospitals, motor buses and subways. Authorities are forbidden to operate any of these projects if they duplicate or compete with existing enterprises serving substantially the same purposes.

When the decision to establish an authority has been made by a local government its legislative body adopts an ordinance or resolution setting forth the articles of incorporation and appoints a governing board of five citizens for staggered terms of five years.

For joint authorities, i.e., those established by several local governments, the number of board members must at least equal the number of municipalities incorporating the authority, but in no case may they be less than five. Where there are less than five participating municipalities representation on the board is fixed in the articles of incorporation.

The board has full power to manage the properties and business of the authority and to establish and alter its by-laws and regulations.

Much has been said about local

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TABLE I
NUMBER OF PENNSYLVANIA MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES INCORPORATED
AND NUMBER IN OPERATION

Type of Local Unit	Number of Authorities	Authorities in Operation	Per Cent in Operation
Boroughs	53	30	57
Townships	22	11	50
Cities	12	5	42
Counties	4	1	25
Joint Authorities	4	3	75
Total	95	50	53

officials serving on the board, and the Pennsylvania Supreme Court decided in the case of *McCreary v. Major*¹ that councilmen of cities of the third class could not serve in such capacity. One fact has been generally overlooked, however. The presence of a local official on the board makes coordination and co-operation between the authority and the municipality easier. Any device facilitating the administrative integration of the authority and the municipality is desirable.

Although too early to form conclusions about the quality of authority administration—the oldest one has been operating only six years—all save one appear to be in good financial condition and have met their bond obligations and current expenditures to date. Many have accumulated surpluses after payment of debt service. One authority, on the other hand, has been liquidated.

Since the passage of the 1935 act, 95 municipal authorities have been organized. Table I shows the authorities incorporated and those in operation by types of governmental units.

Of the 95 authorities 45 are inactive, many of these having been

completely abandoned. Several of those most recently incorporated, however, have not yet begun operation so cannot be classified as completely inactive. The chief reason for inactivity has been failure to obtain funds.

Water Systems Added

More than 60 per cent of the authorities have been organized since the act was amended in 1939 to permit the acquisition of water systems. It is significant, however, that only four have been organized since the act was amended in 1943 placing the acquisition of projects under the jurisdiction of the Public Utility Commission, subject to its approval. This amendment has practically stopped further acquisition of private utilities by authorities; only one has started operation since it became effective.

The population of the municipalities in which authorities are now operating ranges from 726 to 303,411; 74 per cent of the active authorities are in communities under 10,000.

There are three joint authorities. A sewer authority consisting of three townships and five boroughs, another sewer authority made up of eight boroughs and two townships,

¹343 Pa. 355.

and a water authority composed of three townships and one borough.

The 50 municipal authorities currently active operate a total of 52 projects, chiefly water systems. There are 40 water projects, nine sewer projects and one each of the following: a combined theater and municipal building, a gymnasium and a factory building. Two authorities operate two projects each. Twenty-nine purchased privately owned water systems and eight built new water systems. Three authorities acquired water systems from the parent municipality. Nine constructed sewer systems, one constructed a combined theater and municipal building and another constructed a gymnasium.

Public Ownership Increases

The addition of 37 water systems to the list of publicly-owned systems in the commonwealth in four years is a notable achievement in public ownership, since municipal acquisitions of private water systems, exclusive of those taken over by authorities, had totalled only 63 in the state's history.¹ There are 272 publicly-owned water systems in Pennsylvania, and 15 per cent of them are operated by municipal authorities. It may be that the authority device has supplied the necessary impetus to public ownership.

The municipal authority as a new instrument of Pennsylvania local government has been the source of much discussion; arguments have been heard both for and against its use.

As a public corporation the authority has two very important advantages

over the privately-owned utility. The first and most important is tax exemption. The fact that the bonds of municipal authorities are exempt from taxation usually results in an interest rate of 3 per cent or less rather than the usual 4 or 5 per cent on private utility bonds. The resultant saving on debt service over a period of years is substantial.

The second advantage is the availability of federal grants for use in construction of authority projects. A survey revealed that 21 of the 50 Pennsylvania authorities have received federal money either as WPA or PWA grants.

The most controversial provision of the authority law has been the procedure for acquiring privately-owned utilities. The law allowed the authority and the private utility to strike a bargain on the price until the 1943 amendment made the acquisition of private utilities subject to the approval of the Public Utility Commission.

The contention of some is that there should be a determination of value by an engineering survey such as is commonly used for rate-making purposes, since it is believed that the public is insufficiently safeguarded by the simpler procedure. But the usual determination of value based on an engineering survey involves lengthy negotiations and costly engineering and legal expenses. The fact is that during the four-year period when authorities were allowed to acquire privately owned water utilities by striking a bargain with the utility a total of 32 systems were acquired while only 63 localities acquired privately owned water com-

¹List compiled for the writer by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission.

panies under the old procedure. The successful solution to this problem lies in perfecting a technique of acquisition wherein the public is adequately safeguarded and the ease of the bargaining method is retained.

The greatest organizational advantage of the authority device is that it permits joint operation of projects by two or more local governments. Analysts of local government organization point out that many of our units are too small to maintain certain essential services. In Pennsylvania annexation or consolidation has been difficult. But the joint authority accomplishes the same end without the political consequences of the annexation issue. It gives the small municipality equal voice with the large one in the management of the project, and overcomes a major objection of the small community to annexation. This arrangement is likewise more democratic than having the large municipality furnish service to the small one on a contractual basis, since the smaller unit participates in the management. Although only three joint authorities are in operation, the results are being watched with much interest since they may indicate a solution to a most troublesome problem.

On the other hand, it has been pointed out that the authority law lacks a number of important public safeguards. Unlike the bonds of municipal corporations which must be sold at public sale to the highest responsible bidder, the bonds of an authority may be sold at either private or public sale with or without competitive bidding. Further, au-

thority bonds are not required to have state approval as are other municipal bonds. Neither are authorities required to file budgets and reports with the state as are municipalities although authorities operating water systems are asked to file annual reports.

The authority law has been in effect only ten years and the long-est period of operating experience is six years. It seems reasonable to expect, therefore, that when further experience is accumulated defects will be remedied and the authority will become an accepted method of operation.

SAN FRANCISCO'S UNIQUE CHARTER

(Continued from page 277)

people the mayor's absolute control, the charter specifies that the commissioners shall have a four-year "term," a provision both illusory and deceptive.

By and large San Francisco likes its present organic law. Justifiably so, because in operation it has been a practical instrument of better government. Need for further change was recently recognized by the mayor's appointment of a charter revision committee, the efforts of which, however, proved abortive.

Steeped in the strong mayor tradition typified by men like Phelan, Taylor, Rolph and Lapham, San Francisco has a charter not unsuited to its distinctive past and temperament. Political perfection is a mirage. Improvement will be evolutionary rather than radical. And perhaps that is as it should be.

As Maine Goes So Goes Nation

State boasts 58 towns and cities with manager charters; lowered taxes, debt reduction, efficient service usual result of the adoption of up-to-date mode of government.

By BERNAL B. ALLEN*

MUNICIPAL government in the larger towns of Maine had changed little fundamentally since Revolutionary times until two decades ago when there developed a widespread interest in securing a more businesslike administration of public affairs in keeping with the progress of the times. Because of its established success throughout the country and suitable adaptation to communities of both large and small population, the manager plan has replaced antiquated systems in every town where a change of governmental administration has been made during the past ten years. Its success in cities is universally accepted. That it is equally satisfactory for large towns, as well as unions of smaller towns, has been definitely established in Maine.

Fifty-eight towns and cities in the state, with populations ranging from 250 to 75,000, have adopted the manager plan; Fairfield and Rockland

will vote in September on manager charters granted by the 1945 legislature; other cities are contemplating adoption this year. Only Michigan, with 59 manager communities, exceeds Maine in the number of adoptions.

Auburn was the first city to adopt council-manager government, obtaining a legislative charter in 1918; Portland adopted the plan in 1923, Camden in 1925. Other towns and cities followed and results were so amazing that the state legislature passed an enabling act in 1939, making it possible for the plan to be adopted by a town without legislative approval.

It is an accepted fact that improvement of service and economies effected have been so great, town and city manager administered communities have attained a high standard of efficiency accepted as the desired goal of all other communities.

New Portland, a rural mill town with a population of 800, adopted the town manager form of government under the provisions of the state enabling act. Valuation at the time was \$300,000; tax rate, 86 mills; gross debt, \$25,000 and \$12,000 in delinquent taxes. The appointed manager assumed the duties of tax collector, treasurer, road commissioner and agent of the overseers of the poor. Thus was complete coordination of all municipal departments effected. The same individual

*Mr. Allen is president of the Maine Municipal Association, an office to which he has been elected for three successive terms. For four years he was manager of the union of towns comprising Norridgewock, Mercer and New Portland, and is now serving the latter town and Skowhegan in that capacity. Mr. Allen is a native of Kentucky. Following his retirement from the Navy in 1934 he established his home in New Portland, Maine. While serving as first selectman there he made a thorough study of municipal administration and is recognized as one of Maine's leading authorities in that field.

responsible for expenditures was made responsible for the collection of all revenue.

Strict economy governed expenditures for services, especially in the welfare and highway departments. An aggressive effort was made to collect both current and back taxes with gratifying results. Within a short period the town was able to pay off its entire indebtedness of \$25,000 and accumulate a cash surplus of \$9,000 which was invested in government bonds and set aside for postwar projects. During this period an additional \$7,000 was expended from surplus for completion of a new high school building, bridge construction and purchase of a new snow plow. The tax rate was reduced from 86 to 56 mills.

Town's Financial Plight

Norridgewock, a Maine rural town with a population of 1,600 and assessed valuation of \$690,000, had reached a point of financial desperation in 1939. The gross debt was \$90,000, including \$20,000 accounts payable—net debt, \$50,000. Uncollected taxes amounted to \$23,000. The town was unable to pay its school teachers for about seventeen weeks. Part of the state tax remained unpaid for three years. A suit was pending against the inhabitants of Norridgewock by the receivers of the Augusta Trust Company for \$20,000 due on tax anticipation loans.

The town manager plan was instituted in March 1940, likewise under the enabling act. The same organization setup and business procedure as described for New Portland were immediately put in operation. Within

four months considerable progress had been made toward financial normalcy and by the end of the municipal year the debt had been reduced by \$45,000. The tax rate for the following year was reduced nine mills. Pursuing a persistent and insistent tax collection policy, Norridgewock at the end of the fiscal year 1943 was free of debt and had a \$1,250 cash balance.

Mercer, a strictly agricultural town with a population of 300, adopted the manager form in 1941 and operated in conjunction with New Portland and Norridgewock under the legislative enabling act which carries provisions allowing groups of towns to unite in hiring a single manager. During the first year under this system the entire municipal debt of \$5,000 was paid in full. This sounds like a small amount but in reality it represented a sum in excess of 3 per cent of the valuation of the community. The tax rate for the following year was lowered from 75 to 64 mills.

Skowhegan, county seat and largest town in Somerset County, has a population of 7,200. It has several important industries and is the trading center of a community with a population of some 35,000 people, chiefly rural. Situated at the foothills of one of Maine's vast mountain and lake regions, the hub of several highway systems, it enjoys considerable summer recreation business. Property valuation for assessment purposes is \$5,400,000 with a normal annual tax commitment of \$300,000. Total liabilities at the close of the fiscal year 1943 amounted to \$124,000 gross and \$90,000 net.

Even though Skowhegan was in better than average financial condition, citizens of the town came to the conclusion, after an intensive study had been made of the results achieved by several manager-operated municipalities, that the financial structure could be improved, services made more efficient and the business of the town conducted more in accordance with modern procedure under the manager plan. The matter was thoroughly discussed in the newspapers and at a special town meeting in the fall of 1943, when it was voted to make the plan operative at the beginning of 1944.

Manager Plan Installed

A board of seven selectmen was elected at the annual town meeting last March. They met forthwith and from a list of several candidates appointed a manager from out of town who had about five years of managerial experience. He was assigned the duties of road commissioner, tax collector and agent of the overseers of the poor. He was also made responsible for all other administrative details other than those which the law specifically prescribes cannot be delegated to anyone other than the selectmen and assessors.

A special state-approved book-keeping system was immediately installed. Offices were renovated, too, to present a businesslike appearance and an effort made to have every citizen, regardless of his station in life, feel at ease to call and discuss town affairs at any time. Many of those at first most skeptical now agree that service has been more efficient and costs less.

Like many other communities,

Skowhegan is considering plans for financing postwar projects to provide employment during the readjustment period should the need require, and at the same time build much needed sidewalks, highways, sewers and public buildings.

A rigid tax collection program has been followed. Delinquent taxes at the beginning of the year amounted to \$23,000. Sixteen thousand dollars of this has been collected and the remainder charged off as outlawed or dead accounts. Of the current 1944 tax commitments, 99 per cent cash collections have been made. Unexpended balance for the year is approximately \$18,000 which represents 10 per cent of appropriations exclusive of money raised for schools, state and county taxes.

Collection of old taxes, unexpended balances and appropriations for debt reduction have made it possible for the town to reduce its gross liabilities by \$77,000, or 62 per cent, and its net debt by \$61,000, or 67 per cent, during 1944. Unless unforeseen emergencies arise, there is every indication that Skowhegan will be debt-free when it closes its books in 1945. Estimated appropriations for operating accounts this year will be about \$35,000 less than in 1944.

The council-manager form of local government has progressed far beyond the experimental stage. That it has proved satisfactory beyond the slightest doubt in Maine, as elsewhere, is borne out by the fact that municipalities, many of them enjoying its benefits over a period of years, have not in a single instance returned to their previous methods of administering municipal affairs.

News in Review

City, State and Nation

Edited by H. M. Olmsted

Illinois Legislature Blocks Constitutional Revision

Downstate Coalition Prevents Reform of State's Basic Law

ON Tuesday, May 1, the Illinois House of Representatives defeated the movement for calling a convention to revise the 75-year-old constitution of that state. A resolution providing for a referendum vote in November 1946, on the question of holding such a convention, received a vote of 81 to 65, but failed to receive the necessary two-thirds majority by 21 votes.

Governor Dwight H. Green urged approval of the resolution, pointing out that amendment of the old constitution is such a difficult procedure as to be virtually impossible—even though most prospective amendments submitted in the last 50 years have received more affirmative than negative votes. He also emphasized that the 1870 document fails to give home rule to cities. A constitutional convention was also favored by Mayor Edward J. Kelly of Chicago.

Widespread support came from numerous organizations,¹ some located in Chicago and others being statewide—including the State Bar Association. Points stressed were the grossly unequal legislative apportionment and the need of revamping the judicial and taxation systems.

Opposition was partly from interests fearing a state income tax, from certain officials of the State Federation of Labor, and from some manufacturers'

and agricultural representatives. One objection raised was against revision while service men are away; but Governor Green cited the fact that after the referendum, in 1946, it would be at least 1948 before a revised constitution would be ready for popular vote.

Legislative apportionment appeared to be an overshadowing issue. The last apportionment in Illinois was 44 years ago. Under it Chicago and the rest of Cook County, where more than half the population of the state now lives, have only nineteen state senators as against 32 downstate, and only 57 seats in the House of Representatives as against 96 downstate. The chairman of the reapportionment committee of the House is reported as opposed to any plan that would give Chicago and Cook County "a single additional vote in the state legislature."

Downstate Republican and Democratic votes caused the failure of the resolution. Despite the stand of the Republican governor a majority of downstate Republicans joined with nineteen downstate Democrats in opposition to the measure. The 81 votes in favor included 53 Democrats, 37 of whom were from Cook County, and only 28 Republicans.

Reforms Urged in New York Legislative Practices

Two reports on the New York State legislature, from differing viewpoints, have been issued this spring. On March 31 a 121-page printed "interim report" was submitted to the legislature by the Joint Legislative Committee on Legislative Methods, Practices, Procedures and Expenditures, which was appointed by the legislature a year ago to investigate these subjects. Another investigation, under Governor Dewey's auspices, is also in progress. A grand jury report thereon was made May 4.

¹See the REVIEW, May 1945, pp. 239, 246.

The joint committee, headed by Senator Floyd E. Anderson and having Arthur H. Schwartz as counsel, made 36 specific proposals for improvement of the legislature's fiscal and employment practices; and it was pointed out that various recommendations had already been adopted by the 1945 legislature and had resulted in substantial savings and greater clarity in legislative accounts.

Some of the leading recommendations in the report are:

Legislative positions should be more clearly defined under proper titles and adequate salaries should be paid for these positions. The legislature should set up an internal personnel system which would provide minimum qualifications for all legislative positions and which would apply the principle of equal pay for equal work.

Each year in consultation with job classification experts appropriate representatives of both houses should prepare salary schedules to be applicable to all legislative employees including those of joint legislative committees, the finance committees of both houses, the Bill Drafting Commission and the Legislative Library. The legislative leaders thereafter should consult with the legislator as to the clerical assistance he will require and then inform him as to how much clerical assistance he may have, the minimum requirements for these positions, and the salary arrangements.

The legislature should continue to exempt from the patronage system the services of skilled and essential employees and to retain them in office despite shifts in party control.

No appointment to any legislative position should be made from any area without the sponsorship of the legislator from that area.

Annual employees should devote full attention to their tasks and should not

permit other business activities to interfere with the performance of their legislative duties.

There should be flexibility in transfers of employees between both houses and the extension of facilities for the training of employees in legislative practices and procedures.

The original legislative budget should be adequate, whenever possible, to provide for all the expenditure needs of the legislature in order to avoid the necessity of making additional appropriations available for expenditure before the end of the fiscal year.

Arrangements should be made for the proper preauditing by the legislature of all joint Senate and Assembly vouchers before they are sent to the comptroller. To do this the legislature may find it desirable to appoint a fiscal officer directly responsible to legislative leaders.

All joint Senate and Assembly personnel, payroll and expenditure records should be centralized in one office, preferably the office of a legislative fiscal officer.

The report comments on the lack of competition in legislative printing, and in view of the tremendous volume of legislative and departmental printing it suggests that the legislature might find that a state-owned plant used as a yardstick might tend to bring prices down.

Many points remain to be presented by the committee, including sources of legislation, joint and standing committees, compensation and terms of legislators, bill-drafting and research facilities, analysis of rules and procedures, the "legislative jam" and relations to the executive.

On May 4, the extraordinary grand jury that has been investigating legislative spending and practices for over a year made its second report to the court. It contained sharp criticisms of

legislative payrolls and other expenditures, and of the value of the work of some joint committees. Recommendations included: selection of clerks of the Senate and Assembly on the basis of ability, certification of the performance of services, minimums of aptitude and experience for all employees, annual publication of names, addresses and salaries of all legislative employees, prohibition of "kickback" of wages or salaries by public employees, greater care in authorization of committees and in designating attorneys thereto, and strict limitations on the patronage system generally.

Oregon Adopts Comprehensive State Merit System

Oregon became the 21st state to adopt a comprehensive civil service system on a merit basis when a measure passed by the recent legislative session was signed by the Governor, according to the Civil Service Assembly of the United States and Canada. The law becomes effective June 16.

A three-member state civil service commission and a department of civil service are established. The state civil service director, appointed by the commission on a competitive basis, will be responsible for direction of the program under the general supervision of the commission. Salaries of the director and members of the staff are to be fixed by the commission in accordance with the classification and pay plans adopted under the act.

All state employees are covered except certain designated positions in the "unclassified service," including elective and appointive officials and their principal assistants, employees of the courts, the legislature, the governor's office, the secretary of state's office, faculty members in state institutions of higher education, lawyers and the state police.

All employees holding positions in the classified service on September 14, 1940, receive permanent civil service status automatically under the act; others must qualify for such status by passing competitive tests, but these will not begin until at least one year after the war.

Minnesota Legislature Kills Administrative Management Aid

The 1945 Minnesota legislature killed, or at least starved, by failure to provide funds the State Division of Administrative Management¹—which received \$18,000 a year for the past biennium. Another casualty, but more to be expected, was the state civilian defense office.

Two new agencies established by the legislature were the Water Pollution Control Commission, consisting of health, conservation and agriculture department officials and one appointee of the governor, and the Publications Board for administering a law governing the rules and regulations of state administrative agencies. Neither board was given a separate appropriation.

New York Legislature Pioneers in Slum Clearance

The state of New York has enacted a trail-blazing new law² to permit municipalities to use their powers of condemnation and purchase for the purpose of rehabilitating blighted areas, unrelated to any other public improvement.

The new law grew out of a plan of Comptroller Joseph D. McGoldrick of New York City to spend \$20,000,000 of city money to purchase a large substandard area in downtown Brooklyn

¹See the REVIEW, September 1942, p. 445; May 1943, p. 253; December 1943, p. 577; January 1944, pp. 23-4.

²Chapter 887 of the Laws of 1945.

for clearance, remapping, rezoning and resale.¹ This plan was kept out of the city's capital budget by the City Planning Commission a few months ago on the ground that the city had no power to condemn land for such a purpose without specific authority from the legislature. Thereupon the Citizens Housing Council and the Citizens Union—both of New York City—prepared a bill to cure the alleged defect, arranged for its introduction by Assemblyman MacNeil Mitchell of Manhattan and Senator Thomas C. Desmond of Newburgh, and with the help of a widespread public demand secured its enactment, despite the vigorous opposition of Mayor LaGuardia on the ground that complete home rule in this matter was dangerous and might be misused for crooked land deals.

Unlike the elaborate measures being considered in other states, the law is a very simple grant of power. Using language taken largely from the new housing article of the state constitution adopted in 1938, it adds the following sentence to the General Municipal Law:

Section 72-i. Acquisition of real property for clearance and rehabilitation.

The governing board or other appropriate authority of a municipal corporation may acquire by purchase, gift, devise, lease, condemnation or otherwise, in accordance with the provisions of any appropriate general, special or local law applicable to the acquisition of real property by such municipal corporation, real property or any interest therein necessary for or incidental to the clearance, replanning, reconstruction and neighborhood rehabilitation of substandard and insanitary areas, together with adequate provision for recreational and other facilities appurtenant thereto.

Governor Dewey in his message of approval stated that in his judgment:

"It is entirely clear that municipalities should have the right to replan and reconstruct their own blighted areas. They should have that right free of any narrow restrictions as to the type of use to which the cleared property should be put. It may well be that there are blighted areas which should be cleared where the area is wholly unsuitable for housing. But clear them we must, or our cities will degenerate into hollow shells.

"So long as these congested, unsanitary, unhealthy and long since outdated types of habitations are in existence, people will live in them. They will contribute to disease, crime and delinquency and will impair public health and the progress of society as a whole.

"Moreover, the existence of these areas speeds the movement of populations out of the city leaving the developed sewers and public utilities, streets, schools, police and fire houses a waste behind them. They are an economic as well as a social burden upon the city and its people.

"Certainly power as great as that of condemnation must be used with great care and caution. Certainly, also, great projects such as that authorized by this bill should not be undertaken if needed housing cannot in total be replaced either in that area or elsewhere. But it must be assumed that the municipal authorities will use the power responsibly and in the public interest. This bill will remove undesirable restrictions upon the power of a city soundly to conserve its human assets, as well as its physical assets. Within the limits of sound finance it can serve our people and our cities well."

G. H. H., JR.,

¹See "Can We Rebuild Our Cities," by Joseph D. McGoldrick. The REVIEW, January 1945, p. 5.

Personnel Administration for Community Benefit

The New York State Department of Civil Service has prepared for the State Conference of Mayors a 36-page pamphlet, *Effective Civil Service*, which should be of substantial assistance to civil service commissions in the counties and smaller cities of the state which are trying to bring a more effective civil service to their communities.

Intended, as it is stated, as "a guide to commissioners and as a yardstick for testing the administration of civil service in their jurisdictions," rather than as a complete handbook of procedures, the pamphlet yet carries a great deal of practical information in small compass. A glance at the table of contents, which lists 26 subjects including roster records, payroll certification, service ratings, various types of appointments, layoffs, office procedures and public relations, indicates the scope of the matters discussed.

One omission which seems rather surprising in view of the immediacy of the problem is the rights and privileges granted by both the civil service and military laws to returning service men and women, both former employees and those who have attained a place on civil service eligible lists. It appears also that the section on "disciplinary actions" needs clarification and amendment in view of the adoption of Chapter 607 of the Laws of 1945, giving city employees the right to a review of such actions by the municipal civil service commission.

More State and City Employee Retirement Systems

Statewide public employee retirement systems have recently been adopted in Montana, Oregon and Indiana, the Civil Service Assembly reports.

In Montana a new law places all state, county and city employees except

police, firemen and state highway patrolmen, who have their own retirement program, under a retirement system which will be administered by a board composed of the secretary of state, attorney general, state treasurer and three public employees selected by the governor.

For state employees the state will contribute 3 per cent of each month's salary, while for cities and counties the amounts to be contributed will vary with salary scales and with sex of employee. Employees may retire voluntarily at the age of 65 and after 30 years of service, and must retire at 70. At present the plan is optional with state employees but will be required for new employees.

The Oregon retirement act calls for the establishment of a comprehensive retirement program covering state employees. It provides machinery whereby employees of municipalities may be covered by the plan and for voluntary merging of existing retirement systems into the plan.

State employees are provided with a pension system under the terms of the new Indiana public employees' retirement law. Employees of all other local governmental units are permitted by the law to participate in the system if they desire to do so.

The Maryland legislature has recently provided for the inclusion of employees of municipal corporations in the state retirement system.

Retirement systems for municipal employees are in operation in 81 per cent—or 858—of the nation's cities of more than 10,000 population, the International City Managers' Association reports. Forty-five joined the list this year. Of this total, 379 cities cover all classes of employees.

In 1944 some 164 local government units adopted employee retirement plans, including 138 municipalities, four-

teen counties, and fourteen school or park districts, boroughs or townships. Of the 138 municipalities, 117 are in statewide retirement systems.

Council-Manager Plan News

The town of **Bloomfield, Connecticut**, at a special election on April 23, voted 371 to 27 to adopt a new charter providing council manager government. Bloomfield has had a town manager since 1941, constituting little more than a road supervisor. Under the charter he will have enlarged duties including direction of the police department and acting as purchasing agent for all branches of the town government except schools and library. A town council of seven members, supplanting the present board of finance, will be chosen by the voters at the biennial election next October. The Bloomfield Town Charter Association, of which W. D. Barnes is president, has worked for two years to improve the plan of government; one of its committees, headed by W. C. Stauble, drafted the new charter with the assistance of Dr. Thomas H. Reed, consultant for the Connecticut Public Expenditures Council.

In **Massachusetts** enemies of "Plan E"—the council-manager plan with proportional representation—are attacking it in the state legislature through a bill that would repeal the law under which Plan E charters have been adopted in several Massachusetts municipalities. Proponents of the bill assail "Plan E" as "undemocratic." The **Springfield Union** states editorially that the legislative repeal movement "will strike many persons as itself the opposite of democracy, in that it constitutes a denial of the right of citizens to decide for themselves the form of their own local government." The City Manager League of Springfield, which advocates "Plan E" for that city, has urged four state senators from Spring-

field and vicinity to oppose repeal and support the right of the citizens of Springfield and other communities to decide what form of government they shall live under.

In **Tampa, Florida**, more groups have declared themselves in favor of the council-manager plan sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce and its junior counterpart. These include the Tampa Women's Club, the Business and Professional Women's Club and two AFL labor unions; although the Rotary and Civitan Clubs took no official position, their membership, as individuals, voted overwhelmingly for the plan. A charter committee, initiated by the Chamber of Commerce and including representatives of supporting organizations, convened on March 30 and various committees started work early in April. The proposed plan includes the debatable provision for councilmen residing in specific districts, but elected by city-wide vote. A bill embodying the plan has been sent to the legislature. If passed it will be subject to a referendum.

The Chamber of Commerce of **Van Wert, Ohio**, is investigating the advantages of a city manager charter.

The **Parkersburg, West Virginia, Sentinel** is advocating the replacement of the existing commission plan by the council-manager system.

Ypsilanti, Michigan, voted on April 2 in favor of charter revision and elected nine men to frame a charter. The Junior Chamber of Commerce has been active in promoting the manager plan.

In **Hastings, Nebraska**, the Chamber of Commerce is fostering public discussions of the manager plan.

A committee to investigate the advantages of the council-manager plan for **Herington, Kansas**, now under commission government, has been organized with Dr. O. S. Emig as chairman, and has held public meetings.

McAllen, Texas, is considering the adoption of the council-manager plan as set forth in the *Model City Charter* of the National Municipal League.

In **Ottawa, Kansas**, the civic improvement and post war planning committee of the Chamber of Commerce is in favor of a change from Ottawa's present commission plan of government to the council-manager form. It has recommended to the board of directors of the Chamber that it name a city-wide committee of men and women, not restricted to the Chamber, to start action for accomplishing the change. Mayor E. V. Gibson is an advocate of the council-manager plan.

The Board of Freeholders of the city of **Vallejo, California**, is making a study of council-manager and other city charters in anticipation of possible revision or redrafting of that city's present charter.

Several of the successful candidates at the recent city primary election in **Chester, South Carolina**, are reported as being outspoken advocates of council-manager government.

In an advisory referendum on May 8 citizens of **Spartanburg, South Carolina**, voted in favor of the council-manager plan, 644 to 450—a total of 1,095 out of about 1,700 who were qualified to vote. According to the city attorney, a change in the city's form of government must await action of the state legislature which meets in regular session next January; but the city council could by adoption of an ordinance employ a city manager if it so desires; his powers, however, might be quite limited.

Metropolitan Authority for Chicago Transit Lines

Governor Dwight H. Green of Illinois on April 12 signed bills to establish a metropolitan transit authority for the purpose of acquiring and operating local transportation facilities in Chicago

and other parts of Cook County. A popular referendum on approval of such a plan by the people of Chicago is scheduled for June 4. If adopted the plan, after seventeen years of litigation concerning the private transit companies, will provide for unification and improvement and constitute a solution of some of the thorniest aspects of Chicago's 40-year-old transit problem. The authority is to consist of seven members, four to be appointed by the mayor and three by the governor, with at least one of the latter to come from the suburbs.

"Better Chicago" Contest Spurs Metropolitan Planning

A stimulus for ideas as to comprehensive plans for the Chicago metropolitan region is offered in the "Better Chicago" contest sponsored by the *Chicago Herald-American*. Plans entered in the contest must be delivered or postmarked by midnight of July 9, 1945. A main prize of \$10,000, another of \$5,000, one of \$2,000 and eight of \$1,000 will be awarded for the best over-all plans as to what should be done for the metropolitan area. The newspaper emphasizes the need for more effective coordination between the City Plan Commission and other public bodies handling various phases of Chicago's \$947,000,000 postwar public works program. Judges will be Walter H. Blucher, executive director of the American Society of Planning Officials; Daniel H. Burnham, Jr., architect; Harold S. Buttenheim, editor of *The American City*; Walter F. Dodd, lawyer; James C. Downs, Jr., chairman of the Mayor's Committee on Race Relations; Jesse E. Hobson, director of the Illinois Institute of Technology; L. M. Nagy, president of the Institute of Design; John W. Root, architect; and Rev. Bernard J. Sheil.

Police and Firemen under Civil Service in Mississippi

Municipal civil service measures passed by the 1944 session of the state legislature place all policemen and firemen in commission-governed cities above certain population limits under civil service requirements and provide for a board of examiners to administer the program.

In the city of Meridian a Civil Service Board was set up and its rules were approved by the city commission, the governing body. When a new commission took office on January 3, however, the mayor-elect questioned the validity of the law in the light of section 20 of the Mississippi constitution, which provides that "No person shall be elected or appointed to office for life or during good behavior, but the term of all offices shall be for some specified period." The new commission approved a slate of appointments making certain changes in the police and fire departments and replacing the city police court judge and the city attorney. Subsequently the State Supreme Court rendered an opinion in the case of *Glover v. City of Columbus* (19 So. 2d, 756) which caused the commission to rescind its action on all cases save those of the judge and attorney. The Glover case upheld the charter right of the mayor and council to dismiss an employee of the city but left reasonable presumption that the legislative civil service provision would be held constitutional.

The police judge and city attorney filed petitions for a hearing before the Meridian Civil Service Board. An opinion of the state's attorney had held that they were included under "employees." The Civil Service Board further found that the city attorney received monthly compensation and ordered his reinstatement. The commission thus repealed its earlier action,

and moved to reinstate all employees in their former positions.

DAVID W. KNEPPER
Mississippi State College for
Women

Public Employment Increase Challenges Statesmanship

The 1944 report of the National Civil Service League, adopted at its recent annual meeting, stresses the great increase in the number of federal, state and municipal employees and the post-war problems created thereby. It points out that in the last twelve years the total number of public employees and the total public payroll have more than doubled.

From 1932 to 1941 the number of employees in the federal service increased 72 per cent, and its payroll 60 per cent. In state and municipal services combined the increases were 50 per cent in personnel and 15 per cent in payroll. The report states that since Pearl Harbor the federal service has increased by 153 per cent to some 2,930,000 employees, and its payroll by 233 per cent, to about \$6,000,000,000.

In the state and municipal governments the number of employees has decreased 3½ per cent to 3,135,000 although payrolls increased 10 per cent, to \$4,175,000,000, since Pearl Harbor.

The increase in the federal service results largely from the addition of over 1,250,000 employees in arsenals, shipyards and other war activities normally under private control. It is further stated:

"With the end of hostilities the number of federal employees will undoubtedly drop substantially. The number of employees in state and municipal governments, however, will increase as new public projects are undertaken on an enlarged scale. It is estimated that the total number of employees in all branches of government five years af-

ter the war may approximate five million, with an annual payroll of eight billion dollars. To control, manage, and supervise this great civilian army so that it may serve the people effectively, economically and impartially will prove a great challenge to our statesmanship and capacity to govern within our democratic framework. . . . Predatory political machines after the war will be tempted to use a large part of these five million public places for partisan patronage, and all the more so if opportunities for employment lessen in private enterprise. . . .

"Anticipating that grave issues concerning government personnel may arise after the war, the League appointed a Committee on Postwar Civil Service Problems to study three major issues which will face public administrators in the critical period of transition from a war to a peace economy: (1) Demobilizing the federal civil service and reorganizing our state and municipal services, (2) preferences for veterans in appointments in the civil services,¹ and (3) government employer-employee relations."

More States Defeat Federal Tax Limit Proposal

The legislature of Iowa has followed those of Arkansas, Illinois and Wisconsin, in rescinding its previous approval of the proposal to limit federal income tax rates to 25 per cent by constitutional amendment.² As a result, the number of state governments that have approved such an amendment without rescinding their action does not exceed eleven. Resolutions or memorials in favor of the amendment have been killed recently in seven states.

¹See the REVIEW for February 1945, p. 85.

²See the April REVIEW, p. 183.

Researcher's Digest

New Cleveland Bureau Makes Police Survey

Most Serious Defect Found Lack of Esprit de Corps

A 135-page report on its survey of the Cleveland police division—the first major project of the **Cleveland Bureau of Governmental Research**,¹ allied with the **Cleveland Citizens League**—has been published. Its summary of conclusions and recommendations appears in *Greater Cleveland* for April 6. Additional comment will be found in the April 26 issue.

According to the report the Cleveland police force, while an honest, efficient and well officered body, lacks "that somewhat indefinite quality called morale." This condition the report lays to four principal causes: lack of adequate training of new recruits, interference by the director of public safety in the administrative functions of the chief of police, the non-aggressive attitude of the latter, and the activities of the Fraternal Order of Police, which the report recommends should be abolished.

The present numerical strength of the force is adequate, says the report, but there are too many ranking officers, too many police are assigned to civilian duties which could be performed better at less expense by clerks, too many are assigned to duties in offices not a part of the city government, many over-aged men should be retired on pension.

Another recommendation is that the chief of police be made the real head of the police division, responsible for

¹For account of its organization see the REVIEW, March 1944, p. 145.

appointments, promotions and assignments. It is suggested that the stranglehold placed on police administration by state laws and court decisions be removed by legislation in the interest of better local control.

Various methods of improving the operation of bureaus within the police division—motor patrol, detective, welfare and traffic bureaus—are listed.

"Immediate musts" suggested by the bureau include: improved recruiting and training methods, an improved plan of service and in-service training, a service rating system and an equitable and actuarially sound pension system. "If these and other changes and improvements are made," says the survey report, "Cleveland will be able to boast that its police force is, on the whole, made up of a body of honest, efficient and dependable officers and men who can be relied upon to serve Cleveland in any serious crisis which may come to the city."

The survey was made by five members of the bureau's Board of Trustees acting as a subcommittee: John C. McHannon, chairman, Warren L. Morris, Elbert J. Benton, John S. Clark and Archer H. Shaw. The committee was assisted by J. M. Leonard, of the Detroit Bureau of Governmental Research, who was employed as consultant.

Zanesville Worn Out and Broke Says Chamber of Commerce

"In addition to being a worn-out city, Zanesville [Ohio] is broke financially." This is the cheerful introduction to the **Zanesville Chamber of Commerce's Proposed "Pay as You Go" Plan for the Financial and Physical Rehabilitation of Zanesville**, prepared by its Research Department.

Three reasons for the present state of affairs are cited: insufficient revenues, lack of citizen interest in city affairs and lax administration on the

part of city officials. "We have to make a decision as to how we are going to provide more revenue to raise the level and efficiency of our governmental services . . . If we are to launch a 'pay as you go' program a mill levy will have to be voted by the people. This means that 65 per cent of the voters will have to be convinced that they should agree to pay higher taxes. Before we can do this the voters must be assured the additional money will be used wisely and economically. This means having city officials who will handle taxpayers' money as if it were their own."

"Municipal Research Bureaus" Reviewed in This Issue

Municipal Research Bureaus, a study of the citizen research movement in the United States by Norman N. Gill, librarian of the Milwaukee Municipal Reference Library, is reviewed by Lloyd M. Short, director of the Public Administration Training Center, University of Minnesota, on page 318 of this issue.

Pennsylvania Lags in Reapportionment

"The constitutional mandate to reapportion the House of Representatives, like the mandate to reapportion the State Senate, is being ignored by the legislature," comments the **Philadelphia Bureau of Municipal Research** in its *Citizens' Business*. The bureau points out that the present apportionment for the House was made in 1921, based on the 1920 census, with amendments in 1923 and 1929; the Senate also has not been reapportioned since 1921. A reapportionment for both houses, based on the 1930 census, was made in 1937 but was declared unconstitutional by the courts a year later. No attempt has been made to work out any plan based on the 1940 census, but

several bills are before the legislature. The bureau points out that at present on the basis of the 1940 census the representative for the ninth legislative district in Philadelphia had a population of only 9,618 as his constituency, whereas the member for the seventeenth district represented 177,522 persons.

Sixteen Cities Questioned on Budget Practices

A report which the **Municipal League of Seattle for Governmental Research** has prepared for its City Budget and Finance Committee, "How Other Cities Head Off Deficits," covers a survey of sixteen cities in Seattle's population group—Portland (Oregon), Milwaukee, Houston, Louisville, Dallas, Oakland, Memphis, Atlanta, Newark, San Antonio, Minneapolis, Birmingham, Cincinnati, Denver, Kansas City (Missouri) and Seattle. The bureau asserts that most of these cities have better controls over their annual budgets to head off deficits than does Seattle. None of the cities except Seattle and Newark reported operating deficits in recent years. Milwaukee reported that it never had a deficit in operating funds and Cincinnati has not had one for 21 years—the duration of the present manager-P. R. charter. Information secured from the various cities on budget practices is set forth in tabular form. The study concludes with various provisions from the Model Accrual Budget Law of the National Municipal League.

Jersey Plan Urged as Model

The **St. Louis Governmental Research Institute** suggests that the New Jersey welfare department might well be used as a guide in the establishment of the Department of Health and Public Welfare which the new Missouri constitution requires the General Assembly to establish as one of the state's fourteen major departments. The Institute's

Mind Your Business describes the New Jersey setup in detail.

* * *

City Finance Made Digestible

The **Baltimore Commission on Governmental Efficiency and Economy, Inc.**, has issued its fifteenth annual report on *Pertinent Financial Data, City of Baltimore, as at January 1, 1945*. One reason for the report, says William J. Casey, chairman of the commission's Board of Trustees, is "because official city reports of prosaic form do not supply quick and complete pictures of essential details of the municipal government, its structure, finances, general policies and related community factors."

* * *

Help for Legislators

The third edition of *A Manual for Alabama Legislators* has been issued by the **Bureau of Public Administration of the University of Alabama** for use of state legislators, whose sessions convened on May 1 to continue until June 29. The manual was compiled and edited by Dr. Hallie Farmer, professor of history and political science at Alabama College.

* * *

Postwar Plans

"Seattle's postwar planning is not behind that in other cities of its size," concludes the **Municipal League of Seattle for Governmental Research** in a report to its City-County Planning Committee. The report is based on an investigation of the plans of Milwaukee, New Orleans, Cincinnati, Houston, Denver, Louisville, Portland (Oregon), Atlanta, Dallas and Memphis. Most of the cities express the hope that their postwar programs can be financed without materially increasing property taxes. Most cities, like Seattle, have a citizens' advisory committee working with their city planning commission. Tables set forth data on projects, costs, plans for financing, etc., of each city.

Citizen Action

Edited by Elsie S. Parker

High School Pupils Plan Their Communities

Civics Classes Try Hand at Local Redevelopment

THE increasing trend to community life creates as great a challenge to educators as to governmental administrators or specialists in the fields of physical and social development," comments the **New England Town Planning Association** in *Community Planning for Younger Citizens—A Manual for Teachers*.

The planning association, originated in 1932, has chosen as its objective "the building up of interest in and loyalty to local government and community planning in New England," states William Roger Greeley in the pamphlet's foreword. It has worked chiefly with the pupils of civics courses in the public high schools. "The present pamphlet," says Mr. Greeley, "has been prepared to meet an apparent need which has come out of the experience of the last ten years, a manual for teachers which will present a brief outline of community planning and suggestive material for planning projects to be worked out in the schools."

Covered is a description of what is meant by community planning and such specific subjects as communications and transportation, land use, public buildings, housing, blighted areas, economic and social programs, how a plan is made and administered and how paid for. A short bibliography lists additional material for both the teacher and pupil.

Cooley High School students in Detroit are redesigning their neighbor-

hood, according to *The American City* (April 1945). Students are working on a scale model of approximately four square miles covering the area around the school. Starting with the existing pattern, the students have shown on the model the expressways, interchanges, and major thoroughfares proposed by the city and county. From this they have gone on to recommending changes which they themselves feel desirable, introducing play areas for the small children, larger playgrounds, pedestrian paths to schools and playgrounds, new public buildings and an improved residential street pattern designed to discourage traffic through neighborhoods.

Teams of students working independently have developed individual plans for the neighborhoods within the area with the objective of solving traffic flow problems and making provision for recreation and agreeable living.

"By such a project," says *The American City*, "people all over a city may be led to look at their neighborhoods with forthrightness and resolution."

Augusta Citizens Union Surveys City Government

Adequate executive authority, with either a city manager or a strong mayor, is recommended in the report of an administrative and financial survey of Augusta, Georgia, recently completed by the Consultant Service of the National Municipal League for the **Augusta Citizens Union**.

The survey was made by Dr. Thomas H. Reed, assisted by Mrs. Reed. Dr. Reed formerly was director of the Consultant Service.

Other recommendations include a merit system, a modern system of registration and election, a scientific system of real estate assessment, a salary standardization plan, a sound pension plan, a central city garage, abolition of

the position of public safety commissioner.

The making of a survey was one of the originally announced objectives of the Augusta Citizens Union when it was founded in 1942 by Berry Fleming, author and a member of the Council of the National Municipal League, who served as the Union's first president.

High School Civics Lessons on the Air

Recent topics of the Junior Town Meeting of the Air,¹ participated in by Philadelphia public, private and Catholic high school pupils, have included "Are Pressure Groups a Threat to Our Democracy" and "Philadelphia's Department of Public Works."

The "experiment in democracy," as it is called by Dr. A. J. Stoddard, superintendent of schools in Philadelphia, is now in its third year and its fourth score of broadcasts. Other cities—Boston, Cleveland, Cincinnati and Detroit—have asked if such a plan might be worked out for their school systems. Philadelphia school officials term the experiment the widest test of radio as an educational force yet tried.

The plan was conceived by the **Philadelphia Committee of Seventy**, whose executive secretary, Major Harry K. Butcher, has given it credit for not only giving many young people their first lesson in democracy but also awakening greater interest in civic questions among parents. Thus far approximately 1,500 students have participated.

How Far Shall We Go in Pensioning Public Employees?

"Going wild on public employee pensions," is the comment of the **Civic Federation of Chicago** on the numerous

bills before the Illinois legislature to provide pension benefits for public employees. Four of the pending measures would provide pensions for elective public officials. "Evidence that a responsible tax-levying body will hesitate to impose the full burden required to meet mounting liabilities of pension promises made years ago," cites the federation, "already has been supplied by the City Council of Chicago. For 1944 and 1945 the council refused to make the full levy certified to it by the trustees respectively of the Chicago Police and Chicago Firemen's Annuity and Benefit Funds." Taxes extended for the thirteen 1944 Chicago pension funds amounted to over \$13,000,000. Actuarially, however, the Chicago police pension fund was insolvent by more than \$68,000,000 and the municipal employees' fund by over \$2,000,000. Other funds were also insolvent in varying amounts.

Here and There

Citizen Publications

What Your Taxes Bought is the title of the **Seattle Municipal League's** "annual report to the people." Pictographs set forth in primer fashion "where the money came from in 1944" for Seattle, King County and Seattle schools, what the city and county provided for this money, the cost of debt. Services for 1944 are compared with those for 1934. Postwar projects "and how to pay for them" are described. Finally, the work of the league—past, present and future—is described; graphs show "Where the Municipal League Gets Its Money."

The **New Jersey Taxpayers Association, Inc.**, has issued its annual report to members, *On Guard for You in 1945!* A chronological list of activities for 1944 is followed by a general description of the organization and its platform for 1945.

¹See "Youth Builds Today for a Better Tomorrow," by Herbert C. Morris, the REVIEW, July 1943.

The Master Plan

The **Citizens Union of the City of New York** offers its congratulations to the New York City Planning Commission in connection with its proposed new master plan for the Brooklyn civic center and downtown area,¹ on "a highly constructive piece of coordinated planning, bringing together for a single important area well considered plans for highways, parks and public places, schools, public buildings, redevelopment of blighted areas and future zoning to control the use of land by private developers." The union commends the planning commission also on its presentation of the plans to the public "with appropriate brief descriptions and explanations of significant items to supplement the maps."

* * *

Joins Club from Italy

From half way around the globe a few weeks ago came an application for membership in the **Chicago City Club**, accompanied by a check for \$50. The new member is Major John W. Clarke, a Chicagoan somewhere in Italy with the AMG.

The application was sent in by Captain Robert E. Garrigan, former civic director of the City Club, who wrote explaining that after wining and dining the major he followed up by asking whether he was a member of the City Club. The reply was "No." "Why not?" "No one ever asked me." "The major was asked," Captain Garrigan says, and he added: "He promises that if he ever gets back home he is going to do a lot of work for the City Club. He spent a couple of months at Anzio and after that one appreciates things like the City Club." *Chicago City Club Bulletin*.

¹See "Can We Rebuild Our Cities?", by Joseph D. McGoldrick, the REVIEW, January 1945, p. 5.

P. R. Election

Elections for the Board of Trustees of the **Seattle Municipal League** were held May 8-16 by mail ballot. The league has a board of eighteen members elected for two-year terms. Terms of eight trustees expired this year and, as in former elections, their successors were chosen by the Hare system of proportional representation.

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Imitation Is the Greatest Flattery

According to the *Yonkers Herald Statesman*, five New York State municipalities have borrowed a leaf from Yonkers and established schools for civic service similar to the one carried on each week at Yonkers City Hall.¹ John E. Flynn, president of the **Yonkers Young Men's Chamber of Commerce**, which sponsored the school, reports that the communities patterning their projects after Yonkers, all under Junior Chamber auspices, are Rochester, Ithaca, Endicott, Brooklyn and Flushing.

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Citizen Lethargy

According to an analysis made by the **Port Huron (Michigan) Citizens' League**, less than 25 per cent of the city's voters, 5,223 out of 22,128, cast their ballots at the spring election for members of the city council. The League urges its members to show their interest in civic affairs by attending council meetings.

* * *

Citizenship Day

"I Am an American Day," or "Citizenship Day," came on May 20, too late to make any report on the occasion in this month's Citizen Action section. We hope to include a story on its observance next month.

¹See the REVIEW, April 1945, p. 192.

Proportional Representation

Edited by George H. Hallett, Jr.
(This department is successor to the
Proportional Representation Review)

A Conversation with F. D. R.

President Favored P. R., Electoral College Reform

PROBABLY one of the least known facts about Franklin Delano Roosevelt was his sympathetic interest in proportional representation. His preoccupation with great affairs in which P. R. was not involved and the hostility to P. R. of his own party organization in New York City made his general silence on the subject a natural one, yet on at least two occasions he declared himself in no uncertain terms.

My one and only conversation with the late President was in the fall of 1930, when he was Governor of New York. I was then executive secretary of the Proportional Representation League with headquarters in Philadelphia, and the interview was arranged over a minor piece of proposed legislation.

P. R. progress in New York State had been blocked by the question of constitutionality. A favorably inclined charter commission in Rochester had turned away from P. R. when advised by lawyers that it might be thrown out by the courts, and a charter commission in New York City in 1922, while recommending P. R. for the Board of Aldermen, had also recommended a constitutional amendment to make sure of its legality. Yet repeated attempts to pass such an amendment through the legislature were not taken seriously, partly because no one could say with assurance that there was any need for it—and as it turned out there wasn't, since P. R. was later upheld by

the courts after its adoption in New York City.

The P. R. League conceived the idea of getting a test case made by some small community which might be induced to adopt it with full knowledge that the constitutionality question would promptly be taken to court. Interest was developed in the village of Saranac Lake, where a number of leading citizens were convinced that the village manager government would be strengthened by a more thoroughly representative board of trustees. A local bill was drafted to let the village vote on the adoption of P. R. and introduced, but not passed, in the state legislative session of 1931.

Appointment at Albany

In September 1930 I wrote Governor Roosevelt for an opportunity to discuss the matter with him in the hope of enlisting his active support. He replied promptly, on September 26: "Could you run up to Albany right after the campaign is over; for I would like to have a talk with you?"

Accordingly on the morning of November 6 I was ushered into his private office just off the big reception room in the Capitol. The Governor was seated at his desk and greeted me with outstretched hand and a hearty welcome. I have seldom if ever been so favorably impressed with any other public official on first meeting as during the fifteen or twenty minutes of discussion which followed. The Governor was affable, democratic, a good listener and a spirited contributor to the conversation.

After I had outlined our idea about Saranac Lake, he said he had been a strong believer in proportional representation for many years. A local bill like the one we had in mind could hardly be made the object of gubernatorial urging, he explained, because

such matters are considered largely the prerogative of local representatives, but he wanted to direct our attention to a much more important opportunity. Things were shaping up, he thought, for a new charter for New York City. He hoped the advocates of P. R. could spread enough understanding of the system so that it could be included in the new charter.

This was what Mr. Roosevelt had had in mind when he wrote that he wanted to have a talk with me. It took me by surprise, for it was his own party which had topheavy majorities in the legislative bodies in New York City. He was one of the few New York Democratic leaders who recognized these topheavy majorities as liabilities rather than assets. An accurate representation of the normal Democratic majority, including its best elements in due proportion, and a full representation of the opposition might have done much to prevent the excesses which led to the removal of Mayor Walker (with Mr. Roosevelt's help) and the complete discrediting of the local Democratic machine.

Later in Washington

When the long delayed New York charter finally came to a vote in 1936, with a chance to adopt P. R. as he had hoped, Mr. Roosevelt was President of the United States. The local Democratic party organization (Tammany and its allies) led the attack on the new charter and P. R., and the President was silent. Whether his influence was used behind the scenes with some of the more public-spirited Democrats, many thousands of whom voted for the charter and P. R., we never knew, but it was a comfort to know that his influence was not being used against us.

In 1934 President Roosevelt made his one public declaration in favor of the proportional principle. Congressman

Clarence F. Lea of California, now chairman of the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, was sponsoring a constitutional amendment to divide the votes of each state in the Electoral College among the presidential candidates in proportion to their popular votes within the state.¹ The amendment was reported unanimously from committee that year and the President allowed himself to be quoted in its favor. Unfortunately the Rules Committee never allotted time for its consideration and in subsequent sessions it has been given less attention because of the urgency of world problems and the conduct of the war. Sooner or later it will receive the attention it deserves and it may be very helpful to cite a great President on its behalf.

G. H. H., JR.

P. R. for the World Security Council?

From several sources recommendations have been made to delegates attending the San Francisco conference that proportional representation with the single transferable vote be used in the election of the non-permanent members of the Security Council by the members of the world Assembly as the easiest method of getting a representative and fair result.

This suggestion corresponds to a proposal seriously considered in the League of Nations and urged by the government of Norway, following a suggestion by Viscount Cecil of England, in 1926. After the Assembly of that year the Norwegian government filed the following memorandum with the League of Nations secretariat:

"The Assembly at its meeting on September 25, 1926, after a report presented by the Danish delegate, Mr.

¹See article in this department for April 1934, page 219.

Zahle, on behalf of the First Committee, unanimously adopted the following resolution:

The Assembly requests the Council to instruct the secretariat to study the system of the single transferable vote and the principle of proportional representation in general in connection with the problem of the election of the non-permanent members of the Council, in order that this question may be laid before the next ordinary session of the Assembly.

"The question mentioned in this resolution was originally raised by Viscount Cecil in the Committee on the composition of the Council appointed on March 18, 1926, as will be seen from the report of this Committee (C.299. M.139. 1926.V.). On pages 143-144 of this report there is to be found a memorandum from him describing the use of the single transferable vote system, as applied to elections of the non-permanent members of the Council.

Norwegian Support

"This memorandum had attracted the attention of the Norwegian Government, and they instructed their delegation at the seventh ordinary session to take up the question of some form of proportional election, and ask that it might be studied. A proposal to this effect was laid before the Assembly, thereupon sent to the First Committee and there unanimously adopted in a somewhat modified form. The Norwegian member of the Committee underlined the conviction of his government that only some form of election which gives the right to possible minorities to be adequately represented on the Council can give proper security to all the interests in the Assembly.

"In referring to Lord Cecil's memorandum, he said: 'Like any form of proportional representation it looks on paper somewhat complicated, but is in

reality very easy to practise. Where three members are to be elected the method mentioned gives the right to any group which numbers more than one-fourth of the Assembly to elect one member of the Council. This method has been used in Denmark at the election of their Senate for two generations and it is in use today in other countries represented on this Committee, such as the Irish Free State and South Africa at their Senate elections. The system of minority representation was created in Denmark and Holland, two highly civilized and progressive countries.'

"And the Norwegian delegate summed up his government's point of view as follows:

For Complete Representation

"'We have not in this matter to deal with an ordinary political election. We have to elect a Council, and my government which have from the very first day taken a keen interest in the League of Nations and its work, are led to the present proposal by a warm desire of seeing the best possible Council elected. We desire the Council to be fully representative of the world which takes part in this League of Nations, fully representative of the world, politically, intellectually, geographically.

"'Lord Cecil said the other day that we should all have the courage of our opinions. Let us hope that we all have. But it is necessary that all the different opinions should be able to show that courage in the Council, and my government dare not feel sure that that will always be so unless there is a right of minority representation. The future of the League may, to some degree, depend on the representative character of the Council.'

"In order to form an opinion whether it is necessary or at least desirable to adopt a new method of Council elec-

tion, securing representation of the different interests, one has to keep in mind the character and work of the Council. It is the executive body of the League. Different opinions on even vital questions should meet there, but they will have to be consolidated into common action. After full and un-biassed discussion where all opinions should be voiced, the Council has to unite in resolution. It might then mean disaster if well founded viewpoints were ever deliberately kept outside the Council or under-represented thereon.

Under the Old System

"Under the present conditions, private conversations, underhand arrangements and agreements more or less binding interfere in the preparation of the elections and are of deciding importance for their result. The Norwegian government are of opinion that this method is neither desirable nor safe nor entirely dignified. It may lead to results which are not to the advantage of the League and not just. The Norwegian government, therefore, find that some reform is much needed. An improvement might perhaps be achieved if a responsible body within the League were charged with the task of presenting a list; the members of that body would feel their responsibility and know that criticism would await them in case the proposal were one-sided. This idea, however, may meet the objection that it would partly do away with the secrecy of the ballot, and perhaps no Committee would be anxious to take over the task.

"Much the best reform appears to be the adoption of the single transferable vote system. It does in no way pre-suppose fixed parties. It may, however, whenever desirable, lead to combinations *ad hoc*, occasional election agreements between members of a

minority with fairly identical ideas on League questions which fears not to be included in the Council, or not to be properly represented.

"But it should always be remembered that the single transferable vote system does not make such agreements necessary. This will be seen from the following description of the system's technical character.

"1. *Purpose and Effect.* The single transferable vote system of election fulfils a double purpose. It allows electors to exercise a free and independent choice when voting, and it ensures at the same time their equitable representation. The method of voting and the rules for counting the votes of themselves provide that the result of the election shall be an ordered expression of the wishes of the whole of the electing body. Every substantial portion of the electorate is assured of representation."

Then follows a description of the method of voting and counting, with an illustration.

The Norwegian memorandum was referred to the Sixth Committee of the League, which reported unanimously that "the single transferable vote system would be a form of proportional representation which could be applied to the Council elections." In view, however, of the arrangements then being made for non-permanent seats, the Committee expressed the view that these arrangements "should be given a fair trial and the method of balloting now employed should not be changed until it was opportune to do so." The San Francisco Conference presents such an opportunity.¹

¹For the material in this article we are indebted to the British P. R. Society, which has prepared a special memorandum on the subject for the consideration of the delegates at San Francisco.

Taxation and Finance

Edited by Wade S. Smith

Financing Postwar Works Arouses Controversy

Two State Legislatures Seek to Upset Governors' Programs

VIOLENT disagreement as to the postwar use of state funds has already become apparent, at least two state legislatures providing a picture of controversies which may become more general as the day draws closer for the actual use of such funds.

In California the Governor's program to use the state surplus in part for tax reduction, earmarking the remainder for state construction purposes, met strong opposition from the cities and counties. The local units sponsored a bill allocating \$100,000,000 for postwar improvements on projects in which the state had an interest. The fund would be divided 55 per cent to the cities and 45 per cent to the counties, with San Francisco, which has a consolidated government, sharing both as a city and as a county. Distribution of funds would have been in proportion to population, with the local units matching the state grants on a basis left to future legislation.

The local units were not wholly successful in their objective. After a long deadlock, compromise legislation was drafted which: (a) replaced the \$100,000,000 postwar project aid fund with a postwar unemployment and construction fund of \$90,000,000, without specifying either state or local government as the recipient; and (b) eliminated the formula outlining the method of allocating the money to the cities and counties.

Adoption of the compromise legislation, it is contended, has removed the possibility of the Governor's veto of the measure.

In Wisconsin the legislature enacted over the Governor's protest a law to segregate state highway revenues exclusively for state highway purposes, thereby jeopardizing the Governor's \$23,000,000 postwar building program which relied on the availability of highway revenues as general income. Citing the need for new state buildings, Governor Goodland pointed out that in the eleven-year period 1933-44 "the university, state teachers colleges, and the public welfare institutions received a total of \$2,320,785 for buildings and other improvements. In that same period the state of Wisconsin actually spent \$107,129,102 for highway construction alone. An additional \$1,500,000 was spent for park and forest roads." It was considered likely that the bill would be vetoed.

Philadelphia Income Tax Saved

Two bills to repeal Philadelphia's municipal income tax were defeated in the Pennsylvania legislature when the Senate Finance Committee refused to report them favorably. One measure was an outright repealer, the other would have exempted non-residents from the tax.

Last year, the income tax (which is levied in the guise of a gross earnings tax) yielded Philadelphia over \$22,000,000, as compared with just under \$40,000,000 received from the general property tax. Failure of proponents of the repealer to advance an adequate program of replacement revenue was said to have influenced the legislative committee in its decision to kill the bills.

Suggestions on Reporting Local Finance

In this column in April and May comment was made on some of the factors whose observance will permit local units to participate in the prevailing low cost of borrowing money. As has been described, most of the larger units which borrow with some frequency now have the "know how" to take full advantage of current conditions in the money market. Many smaller units, which borrow only occasionally, are now coming on the market to sell their bonds for postwar projects, and their use of the best prevailing practice can go far to assure that they too secure the benefits of present low interest rates.

The more interest there is in a bond offering, in general, the more bidders there will be, and the greater opportunity for a really advantageous sale. Probably no single factor will contribute more—in the case of a smaller and relatively lesser known unit—to wide interest on the part of prospective bidders than a good financial statement or prospectus, prepared well ahead of the date of the proposed sale, and sent to the national financial journals and to regional and national banking and investment houses known to specialize in municipal bonds.

The financial prospectus for a municipal bond offering is usually mimeographed or printed, although some good ones produced by the hectograph process are not lacking. It's the contents rather than the form that counts, although a pleasing appearance and easy readability add to effectiveness. As briefly described last month, the length is determined only by the necessity to cover certain essentials: correct legal title of the issuer, date of incorporation or establishment, area and population, description of form of government, description of debt and tax

rate limits applicable to the unit (and whether or not bonds and interest are payable from taxes levied inside or outside such limitations) and statistics on assessed valuations, tax rates, tax levies and collections, bonded and unfunded debt and sinking funds, annual bond maturities, and summary statements of annual operations for governmental and public enterprise funds.

The non-statistical part of the prospectus will obviously show the greatest variation from unit to unit, and it also offers the greatest latitude for working in material which may be particularly informative. This is especially true of matter descriptive of area and population.

Patterns to Follow

As to financial statistics, there is a fair degree of standardization for some of the data. More than a decade ago the Investment Bankers' Association adopted a *pro forma* financial statement after discussion with various authorities on local finance, and some of their exhibits are now widely used. Two in particular merit detailed description, the tax collection statement and the debt statement.

The tax collection statement most widely used is in fact a statement of levies and uncollected balances. It usually covers a period of three or more years, one column identifies the fiscal year, the next shows for each year the amount of taxes levied, the third shows the amount uncollected on each levy at the close of each fiscal year, and the last column shows the amount uncollected on each levy as of the date of the statement. Uncollected balances are customarily shown also as percentages of the respective levies, the data of the third column showing what is now usually described as "year-end current tax delinquency." The table can be varied to

add an extra column to show uncollected balances a year prior to the date of the statement, or to add a supplementary form giving comparative current collections for less than a full year, or to give comparative figures on the combined collection of current and delinquent taxes for several succeeding years.

The second form widely popularized by the I.B.A. is the over-all debt statement. This recognizes that local government is the responsibility of a variety of local units which generally overlap, so that the area of a city is responsible not only for city debt but also for, say, the debts of an overlapping school district, county and perhaps special districts as well. The debts of these several overlapping units are apportioned to the unit under study on the basis of assessed valuations. If a city accounted, for example, for three-fourths of the county assessed valuation and had a coterminous school district, then its overlapping debt would be represented by three-fourths of the county debt and all the school district debt.

A further concept is used in the over-all debt statement, that of tax-supported net debt. This concept has no legal status (as have the several state requirements as to legal net debt for computing borrowing capacity) but is simply a formula devised to secure roughly comparable debt statistics which will eliminate some of the more glaring dissimilarities between local units. A little thought will readily indicate that the debt of a city including that for water, light and power, transportation, or other utility services, cannot be equitably compared with that of a city where these so-called "utility" services are provided by privately-owned companies. If comparable statistics are to be secured, either these utility or public service enterprise debts must be excluded where they are

municipally-owned or the debts of the private companies must be added to the public debt where they are privately-owned. Statistically, either method would be satisfactory. There are evident difficulties in the second alternative, however, so the simple method is to deduct municipal debt for public enterprise purposes. In practice, the deduction is often made only to the extent that the debt in question can be supported from the earnings of the enterprise, and only if it is of a type customarily regarded as non-governmental.

An explanation of this concept of tax-supported over-all net debt makes clear the reason for a considerable amount of the detail needed in good debt and operating statements. Obviously, if the customary deductions are to be made, the debt statement of a governmental unit seeking to sell its bonds must be in sufficient detail to yield the required figures. If there is any public service enterprise debt, such as water, light and power, street railway, bus, etc., it should be itemized in the statement, as should the sinking funds applicable to it. Similarly, in the bond maturity schedule this segregation would be preserved. And in the operating statements, separate statements of revenue and expense should be provided for each public service enterprise with debt outstanding which is represented to be wholly or partially "self-supporting."

In the case of the operating statement covering general government and payments on general improvement debt, sufficient detail should be shown to indicate the more important revenues and the chief expenditures. Also, there should be shown in summary form year-end cash and current liabilities, and all this operating data should be set up to cover three to five years on a comparative basis.

Local Affairs Abroad*Edited by Edward W. Weidner*

**Property Taxation
in New South Wales*****Local Government System
Is Based on Land Values***

THE articles in the NATIONAL MUNICIPAL REVIEW for April and July 1944, discussing the methods of local taxation in Great Britain and the United States, suggest that readers of the REVIEW may be interested in the local taxation system of New South Wales. This country has had experience of two systems, both of which differ from the British occupancy tax and the capital value system of the United States.

Formerly municipal councils in New South Wales imposed rates—as local taxes are called—on the assessed annual values of properties. Such valuation was taken to be nine-tenths of the actual or assumed rental. Where a property was let the rental, less one-tenth, was the assessed annual value. Where it was occupied by the owner it was necessary to estimate what rental it would command.

Where land was idle, 5 per cent of the capital value was held to be the assessed annual value. This led to considerable areas near centers of population, obviously held for an increase in value, being let on nominal terms so as to be assessed on the rental. Substantially it was a system of occupancy tax, with very low rates on idle land. But there was no suspension of payments when premises were unoccupied.

The system did not give satisfaction so agitation arose with a view to abolishing the tax upon the use of the land in favor of local taxes upon the value of the land irrespective of the

improvements upon it.

In 1904 J. H. Carruthers became premier. He had previously promised to alter the rating system and he was as good as his word.

Up to that time we had 192 municipalities in New South Wales. Governmental operations were confined to populous centers. The rural areas of the state had no form of local government. They depended upon the state for their local works and services. Mr. Carruthers provided for 134 shire councils for rural areas, except the sparsely settled western division. A form of local taxation was necessary. Mr. Carruthers said we have a clean slate, we can write what we like on it. So he provided for rates on the value of land, exclusive of improvements. We call it rating on unimproved values.

With the existing municipalities it was not so easy. Premier Carruthers felt that the local people should have some say in the matter. In accord with his promise he stipulated that a proportion of the rates should be on the unimproved value. For the balance they could rate on the capital value of land and improvements—the United States system. Annual assessed value rating was abolished. But if a council proposed to rate partly on land values and partly on capital values of land and improvements, a certain number of ratepayers could demand a poll and settle the issue themselves. Most councils, however, preferred the unimproved values system. In some cases where dual rates were proposed polls were demanded and in all cases the majority favored rating upon the value of land only, thus exempting the use of the land from the burden of local taxation.

As the land values system was so generally favored the option, so far as general rates were concerned, became obsolete and was abolished in 1919.

The city of Sydney had its own act and did not come under the Carruthers Local Government Act of 1906. The citizens, however, were so impressed with the success of the unimproved values system that the City Council sought power to raise local revenue in the same way. This was granted and rating on land values was partly adopted in 1909 and entirely in 1916.

Now a few words as to the reasons why the New South Wales system is so generally favored. It is held that the value of the land is a public or people value. It comes into existence with population, rising if it increases and falling if it decreases. With population arises the need for local public works and services. It is held that the value of the land is the natural source of revenue for such purposes. If drawn upon to pay for them the use made of the land is exempt. The old injustice, as it was regarded, of increased rates when improvements were made was abolished.

The new system had social advantages. It attached some responsibility to owning land. It checked land speculation to some extent, though not entirely because the rates represented only a small proportion of the economic rent of the land. It made it easier for those requiring land for homes or business purposes to get it. It operates to lessen the effect of depressions. When land becomes excessively high in price, through speculation, it does not pay to use it. This especially applies to all who have acquired land at rising values on terms. A fall in prices often means ruin to them.

Mr. Collins¹ refers to the objection to the English system that land is withheld from use until a high price, one might say a famine price, can be ob-

tained for it. There have been so many cases of this sort that a record of them would fill a good sized book.

I agree with the view that is generally expressed by authorities in the United States that the capital value basis is better than the English occupancy basis. Professor Simpson puts it clearly in his reference to Chicago.² He stated: "Why one-third of the urban area should be completely exempt from any contribution to the city whose growth created its value is not clear. To Americans it does not make sense." He also refers to the effect of destructive taxation adding to land vacancy.

Can we not use the great power of taxation so intelligently as to make it destructive only of what is pernicious, and in favor of all the good things that make for human progress and happiness?

A. G. HUIE, *Secretary*
Free Trade and Land Values League
Sydney, New South Wales

Many Countries Concerned with Housing and Planning

The Minister of Health in England has warned local housing authorities that the rate at which housing sites are being prepared for temporary prefabricated dwellings is entirely too slow and must be speeded. He has also said that the government has decided to change over to the construction of permanent houses as soon as conditions permit.

Through such proposals as are contained in the Distribution of Industry Bill and the Requisitioned Land and War Works Bill, the central government proposes to give itself increased powers as to planning and land use. Through the means of the former the government would have power to influ-

¹See "Occupancy Taxes in Britain," by Arthur Collins, the REVIEW, April 1944.

²See "Shall U. S. Use Occupancy Tax," the REVIEW, July 1944.

ence the location of industry and through the latter it would be enabled to acquire requisitioned land on which expensive buildings or other works have been erected for war purposes.

Emphasizing that planning, housing and reconstruction problems are truly concerns of all countries, several articles have recently appeared on the problems of particular areas. Some provincial and local plans in India are summarized in *Indian Information*, November 15, 1944. Comments on the housing problems of several European countries are to be found in the *Municipal Journal and Public Works Engineer* of January 19, 1945. Several issues of *Free France* have commented upon France's reconstruction problems, both from national and local viewpoints (January 15, February 1 and March 1, 1945). In the latter country, the number of buildings destroyed according to preliminary estimates is in excess of 1,200,000; the percentage of buildings destroyed varies from 20 per cent in some cities to as high as 90 per cent in others.

Planning for Russian Local Governments

The fundamental thing about Russian local government is that it cannot be separated from the national government, according to a recent article.¹ Exemplifying this fact is the planning process. For each five-year period the growing needs of the country are assessed and the resources in work and materials calculated. Then the plan is prepared to cover the whole industrial, agricultural and economic life of the country. Each district, city, village and farm is given its own yearly plan, and the planning is reciprocal. On receiving its plan, the city or vil-

lage soviet, the industrial or agriculture organization, calls a meeting at which the plan is discussed. Emendations go back to "Gosplan"—the central planning authority—and more discussion follows until the final plan is accepted.

There are local elections in Russia, although rival parties are not permitted and the candidates compete only with respect to the excellence of their records as workers and citizens.

English Committee Makes Valuation Proposals

The Central Valuation Committee, a national advisory body in England's system of property valuation, has come forth with a plan to revise the valuation system in that country.¹ The committee is of the opinion "that in the light of past experience it is unlikely that a satisfactory measure of uniformity of valuation . . . will be achieved so long as the existing organization for valuation is maintained."

Four principal changes are recommended: (1) Special *ad hoc* valuation areas should be constituted of such a size as will allow full-time employment of a skilled valuation officer for each area with the necessary staff. At present valuation areas are the counties and county boroughs, which are evidently considered too small. (2) For each such area there should be a valuation authority representative of the local authorities within the area. (3) This authority should act as a first appeal tribunal for the hearing of objections and proposals. The existing practice is to have assessment committees—numbering some 340, mostly on a sub-county basis—act in this capacity. (4) Special appeal tribunals should be established replacing the practice of

¹From an account by D. M. Adams in *Local Government Service*, March 1945.

¹The plan as outlined by the committee is described in the *Municipal Review*, February 1945, pp. 40-41.

having the regular courts hear such cases.

These proposals are significant for at least two reasons. In the first place, uniform valuation is becoming increasingly important because of the greater importance of central grants to localities, which are frequently based upon local valuations. Secondly, the proposals underline the tendency in England and Wales towards larger local units of administration.

News in Brief

Government by Secrecy

The February issue of *Local Government Service* criticizes what it terms a growing evil in English local government, namely, a system whereby local public policy is determined by party caucus behind closed doors. In one local unit, for example, "should an unexpected issue arise in the council, the meeting would be adjourned to enable the caucus to decide its policy in private before presenting it to the council as a *fait accompli*." Such a practice, declares the journal, "is the antithesis of democracy and if it spreads it will mean the end of local government as we know it."

* * *

Equal Pay

The National Executive Council of the National Association of Local Government Officers (England) has approved the case for equal pay for equal work as between men and women. NALGO recently presented arguments supporting equal pay before the Royal Commission on Equal Pay.

* * *

Security of Tenure

A recent court action in England held a town clerk partly liable for certain expenses incurred by the council because he had failed to bring to its attention a report strongly condemning

the course of action taken. His defense was that a member of the council warned him that if he disclosed the report he would be fired. *Local Government Service* uses this case to demonstrate that all principal local government officers need security of tenure. Most are at present employed at the pleasure of the council, although a few, such as the medical officer of health and the public assistance officer, now enjoy such protection.

* * *

School for Election Candidates

One local branch of the British Labor party is organizing a school in local administration for prospective candidates for local office and any other citizens who are interested.

* * *

Local Government in Scotland

A Local Government and Public Health Consolidation Committee for Scotland is at work but is expected to make only minor recommendations.¹

* * *

Indian Education

India is considering a national system of education for after the war which would replace in part and supplement the present provincial and local system.

* * *

Brazilian Elections

The expected fall elections for Brazil may include local as well as state and national offices, according to the latest information. However, an electoral code has not been formally proclaimed yet.

* * *

Milk Supply

In Victoria a state-controlled agency has been set up to regulate metropolitan milk supplies from the point of production to delivery to the consumer.

¹Summarized in the *Municipal Journal and Public Works Engineer* (London), February 2, 1945, p. 220.

County and Township

Edited by Elwyn A. Mauck

Efficiency Trends in County Government

Missouri Counties Consider Home Rule

CIVIC organizations in Missouri have begun to consider the possibilities of improving their county governments under provisions of the new state constitution. The local chambers of commerce in Jackson (Kansas City) and St. Louis Counties are taking the lead in considering the advantages of home rule charters for their respective counties.

City-County Departments of Health Increase

A recent report by the International City Managers' Association indicates that 25 per cent of the nation's municipalities of 10,000 or more population participate in the operation of joint city-county health departments. This represents a slow but steady growth in adoption of the idea.

The 1944 combined budgets of the 210 joint city-county health departments represent an expenditure of \$8,305,000, or 70 cents per person covered. The activities of the departments include venereal disease control and maternal and child health services under the impetus of federal health programs, sanitation, communicable disease control, dental hygiene, health education and vital statistics.

Wisconsin Considers Sheriffs and Justices of Peace

Under the present Wisconsin state constitution county sheriffs can serve no more than two consecutive terms,

but the 1943 and 1945 state legislatures have approved an amendment removing this prohibition. Final action will be taken by the electorate of the state through a referendum to be held in April 1946.

The voters of the state recently approved a constitutional amendment abolishing justices of peace in Milwaukee.

King County, Washington, Secures Central Purchasing

The major piece of legislation enacted by the 1945 Washington state legislature for King County (Seattle), Washington, was a statute providing for centralized purchasing and the appointment of a county purchasing agent. By centralized and competitive buying, county officials anticipate savings of approximately 15 per cent in county purchases. The purchasing agent, appointed by the county commissioners, will do the purchasing now performed by thirty county departments. Contracts and purchase orders involving more than \$1,000 can be let only through competitive bidding.

In 1939 the county commissioners established a centralized purchasing system, but the Washington State Supreme Court ruled they did not have legal authority to do so. It is believed the present statute will survive the test of legality.

County Budgeting Wins Commendation in Nebraska

After seven years of experience under the Nebraska county budget law, the Nebraska Federation of County Taxpayers Leagues voices its approval and lists the accomplishments of the law as follows:

1. Infinitely better administration of the affairs of county government;
2. Transformation from slipshod, deficit-financed government to one

well operated on pay-as-you-go basis;

3. Tax levies drastically lowered; and

4. Many hidden obligations, such as unpaid bills and leases, eliminated.

Local Officials Organize In Pennsylvania Counties

Local government officials in Northampton and Chester Counties, Pennsylvania, have organized in county-wide associations. In addition to permitting their members to become better acquainted, the associations will give opportunity to consider the problems the members have in common such as acquisition of property being declared surplus by other government-

al units, influencing state legislation which affects the local units and other matters.

Dane County, Wis., Postpones Action on Merit System

The expiring Board of Supervisors of Dane County (Madison), Wisconsin, adjourned *sine die* recently without action on a merit system ordinance which had been pending before it as a special order of business for several meetings. The attitude of the board appeared to be summarized by one member who stated, "Dane County has got on since its organization in 1848 without civil service, and I think it could stand a few more months."

THE LEAGUE'S BUSINESS

(Continued from page 270)

effective central figure who charged the batteries of all the younger men who developed around him. The Public Administration Clearing House really became possible at the beginning because Brownlow was available to develop it. And experience proves that his selection was an inspired choice!

Mr. Brownlow was chairman of the President's Committee on Administrative Management in 1936, and with Dr. Charles Merriam and Dr. Luther Gulick made the recommendations which were enacted in the Reorganization Act of 1939, simplifying the departmental structure under the President.

He was awarded an LL.D. degree by American University, Washington, D. C., in 1938. He has been decorated Knight of Polonia Restituta (Poland); Officer of Ordre de la Couronne (Belgium); and Gran Oficial de la Orden Heraldica de Cristobal Colon (Dominican Republic).

He will remain as a consultant to Director Emmerich to give particular attention to international contacts through the International Union of Cities, the Institute of Administrative Sciences and the International Town Planning and Housing Federation, which until 1940 maintained headquarters in Brussels. He is director-general of the Inter-American Congress of Municipalities, with headquarters in Havana.

Mr. Brownlow has been active for many years in the affairs of the National Municipal League. He has served as first vice president, a member of the Council and on various League committees. He is a member of the editorial council of the NATIONAL MUNICIPAL REVIEW.

RICHARD S. CHILDS

Death of Mayo Fesler

Mayo Fesler, director of the Citizens League of Cleveland for 32 years, died May 6 at the age of 73. He had retired a few weeks earlier because of ill health and was succeeded by John E. Bebout, former director of the New Jersey Constitution Foundation.¹

Dean of civic secretaries, Mr. Fesler was a noted and always aggressive fighter for causes which would contribute toward good government in Cleveland and elsewhere. During his more active years, Mr. Fesler was considered one of the most forceful and clear-visioned of civic leaders. As a high government official said at the time of his retirement: "In his lexicon there was no such word as appeasement, in his geography there was no Munich, and in his stock in trade there was no molasses."

Mr. Fesler was educated at DePauw University and the University of Chicago, later organizing the Alumni Association of the latter university. He became secretary of the St. Louis Civic League in 1904 and in 1910 transferred to the Cleveland organization. For five years, 1917-22, he was secretary of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, then for a year secretary of the Chicago City Club before returning to the Cleveland position in which he served until his death.

He was identified with the National Municipal League for many years, serving at various times as a member of the Council and on special committees. He was an honorary vice president at the time of his death.

Augusta Survey Report Published

The report² on the recently completed administrative and financial survey of Augusta, Georgia, made by the League's Consultant Service, was published in May by the Augusta Citizens Union. The report was written by Dr. Thomas H. Reed, former director of the Consultant Service, who was assisted in the survey by Mrs. Reed.

Charles P. Taft to State Department

Charles P. Taft, an honorary vice president and former member of the League's Council, has been made a special assistant to the Assistant Secretary of State and in that capacity attended the United Nations Security Conference at San Francisco.

New Honor for Murray Seasongood

Murray Seasongood, Cincinnati civic leader and former League president, has been appointed a member of the Harvard Overseers Committee to Visit the Department of Government. He is also a member of a similar committee to visit the Graduate School of Public Administration (Littauer School).

¹See REVIEW, May 1945, p. 247.

²See also p. 301, this issue.

Books in Review

Municipal Research Bureaus. A Study of the Nation's Leading Citizen-Supported Agencies. By Norman N. Gill. Washington, D. C., American Council on Public Affairs, 1944. 178 pp. Clothbound, \$3, Paperbound \$2.50.

This significant study of twenty of the leading citizen-supported governmental research agencies in the United States was made in 1937-38 under the auspices of the Committee on Public Administration of the Social Science Research Council. Questionnaires, bureau reports and documents, and personal interviews provided the author with the material upon which the study is based.

The book opens with a brief history of the research bureau movement which emphasizes its relation to the growing citizen demand in the early part of the twentieth century for greater efficiency and economy in government—a relationship also stressed by Dr. Lent D. Upson in his foreword to the volume.

The New York bureau, established in 1906, was the first to appear on the municipal scene, followed by the Philadelphia and Cincinnati bureaus in 1908 and the Chicago bureau in 1910. The decade of the twenties witnessed a marked expansion in the number and financial strength of these research agencies, but they were hard hit during the depression years, from which they had only begun to recover at the time the study was made.

This historical account is followed by a description of various types of citizen research agencies in order to differentiate the municipal research bureaus here studied from taxpayers associations, chambers of commerce, and other civic organizations. Nonpartisanship, professionally trained staffs, attention to problems of administration rather than matters of policy,

dissemination of information to the citizen, and cooperation with, rather than antagonism toward, the public official are said to be distinguishing features of the true research bureau.

Subsequent chapters are devoted to an analysis and interpretation of research bureau activities, methods of citizen education, composition of boards of trustees and professional staffs, and sources and trends in financial support. In all these respects the bureaus have had reasonable success, but not without difficulties and certain obvious shortcomings.

One chapter is devoted to the efforts of the research bureaus to band together for purposes of mutual benefit in a Governmental Research Association—an organization which has had its ups and downs due mainly to problems of finance and membership.

The author also gives attention to some of the more recently established governmentally-supported research bureaus, observing as follows: "While public bureaus may assume many activities which citizen agencies have been performing, the former can hardly take over, with appropriateness, the entire field. There will always be need for the independent agency, at liberty to appraise and criticize policies and administration. Playing different roles and supplementing each other's activities, both agencies can function in the same community."

In conclusion, the author summarizes the most notable achievements of the municipal research bureaus and then offers some constructive suggestions for the future, including new areas for research activity, a greater representation of professional and labor leaders on boards of trustees and a broadening of the base of financial support, a greater degree of professionalization in staff, and closer cooperation with the universities.

This interesting and informative little book should have a wide reading among municipal officials, scholars and public-spirited citizens. The gap between theory and practice in the municipal research movement is rather obvious, but that democracy has need for effective organs of citizen information and criticism is equally obvious. Consequently Dr. Gill's contribution to our knowledge and understanding of the points of strength and weakness in the municipal bureaus during their early years should provide the stimulus and the guides to the development of more effective citizen-supported research agencies in the future.

LLOYD M. SHORT

University of Minnesota

Additional Books and Pamphlets

Aviation

Aviation and the States. Chicago, Council of State Governments, *State Government*, May 1945. 18 pp. 35 cents.

Employment

Jobs for Californians in Retail Trade. Sacramento, California State Reconstruction and Reemployment Commission, 1945. 38 pp.

National Budgets for Full Employment. Washington, D. C., National Planning Association, 1945. viii, 96 pp. 0 cents.

Planning Jobs and Jobs in Planning. By Otto H. Ehrlich. Boston 8, Bellman Publishing Company, 1945. 40 pp. \$1.

Federal Government

United States Government Manual—1945 (first edition, revisions through March 10). By Office of War Information, Division of Public Inquiries. Washington 25, D. C., Superintendent of Documents, 1945. 714 pp. \$1.

Homes

Home Ownership: Is It Sound? By

John P. Dean. New York, Harper & Brothers, 1945. xiv, 215 pp. \$2.40.

Housing

War Housing in the United States. Prepared for Use at the Conference of the United Nations in San Francisco, California, by National Housing Agency. Washington 25, D. C., Superintendent of Documents, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1945. 36 pp. 10 cents.

Metropolitan Areas

The Boston Contest 1944. Prize Winning Programs.¹ Boston, Boston University Press, 1945. 148 pp.

Monetary Policy

Money and the Law. Proceedings, The Institute on Money and the Law 1945. New York University School of Law and the Economists' National Committee on Monetary Policy. New York, Supplement, *New York University Law Quarterly Review*, 1945. viii, 159 pp. \$2.50.

Personnel

Civil Service in Colorado. Denver, University of Denver, Bureau of Business and Social Research and School of Commerce, Accounts and Finance, 1945. iv, 16 pp.

Planning

American Planning and Civic Annual. A Record of Recent Civic Advance in the Fields of Planning, Parks, Housing, Neighborhood Improvement and Conservation of National Resources, Including the Addresses Delivered at the Citizens Conference on Planning, Held on the Fortieth Anniversary of the Organization of the American Civic Association at Saint Louis, Missouri, on June 14, 15, 16, 1944. Edited by Harlean James. Washington, D. C., American Planning and Civic Association, 1945. xviii, 178 pp. \$3.

Planning for Schenectady. Progress

¹For a discussion of prize winning programs see the REVIEW, January 1945, p. 30.

Report of the Interdepartment Post-war Planning Committee. Schenectady, *Your City Government*, 1944. 24 pp.

Public Works

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